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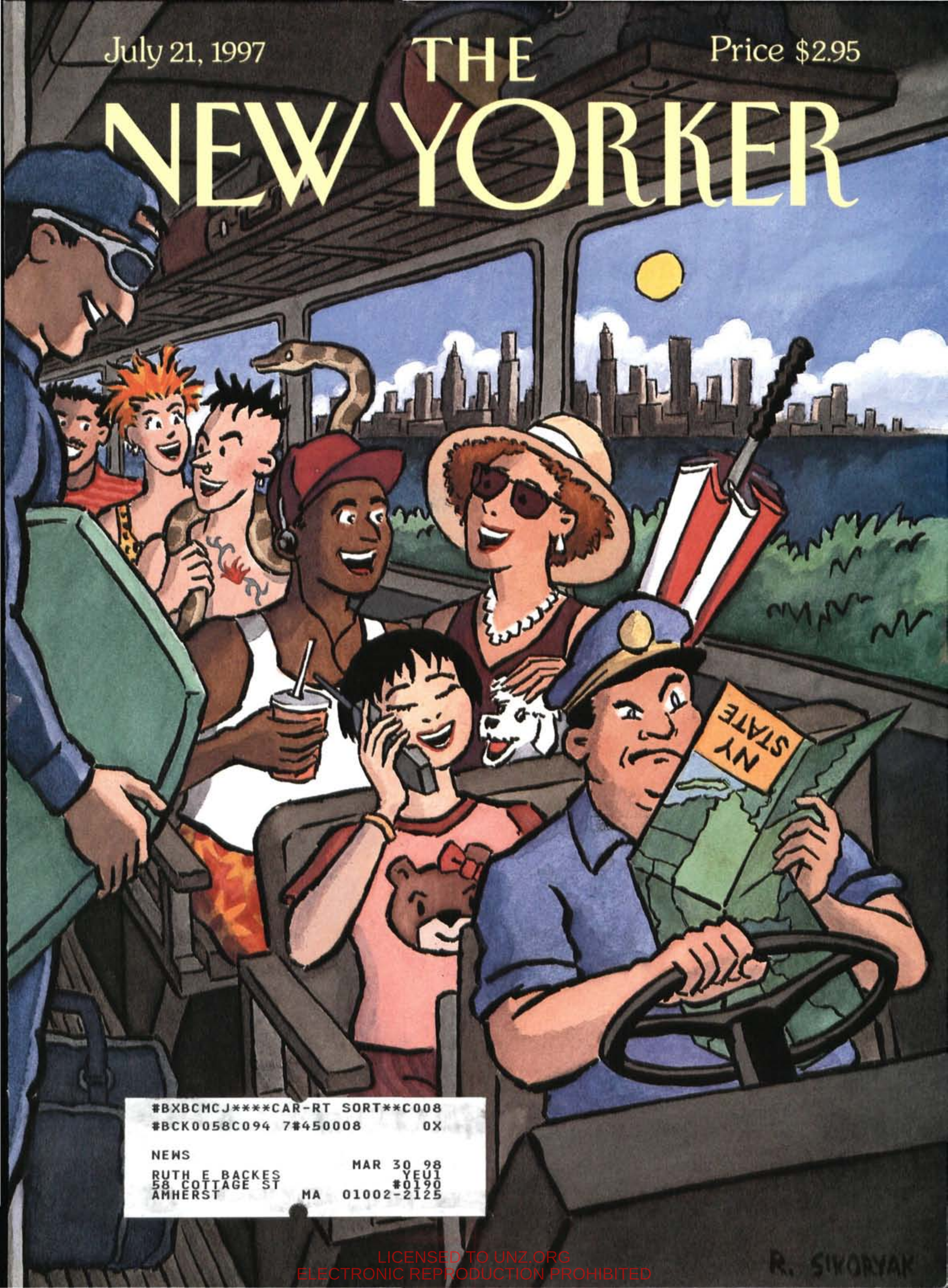
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JULY 21, 1997

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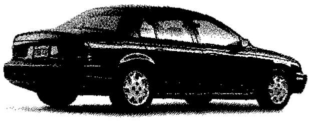

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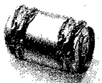

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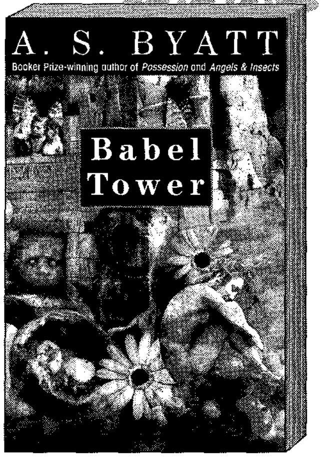

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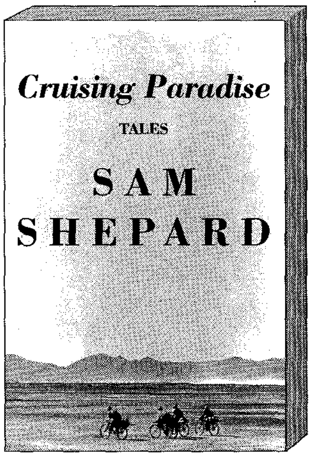

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COMMENT

STAR-SPANGLED BANTER

For the land of the free, from the owner of the Braves.

TED TURNER set off a firecracker of his own this Fourth of July. Speaking in front of Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, he argued that it's time to dump "The Star-Spangled Banner." Over the years, Mr. Turner has had many capital ideas—CNN, Turner Classic Movies, and interrupting Jane Fonda's career as a serial monogamist, to name three. Now he has come up with another, and one cannot but agree with him. By all means, let us ease the old chestnut into well-deserved retirement. But not for the reason he offers, and not to make way for the alternative he recommends.

Mr. T notes that the national anthem is warlike, whereas the age we live in is (relatively) peaceful. He is right on both counts, but his second point makes his first less compelling. Just as gun control is more urgent in Detroit than in Lausanne, bellicose songs are more worrying in bellicose times than in times of tranquillity. "The Star-Spangled Banner" is warlike, yes. But so are a lot of first-rate national anthems. ("The Marseillaise," with its ghoulish call to "drench our fields" in "impure blood," makes its American counterpart sound like a Joni Mitchell ditty.) In any case, there are plenty of better reasons for getting rid of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Its tonal range corresponds to that of the electric guitar, as Jimi Hendrix proved, but not to that of the human voice. The lyrics include some fine phrases—"the twilight's last gleaming," "the ramparts we watched"—that are a reliable source of titles for the type of potboiler novel that goes in for raised lettering on the jacket, but on the whole the words don't convey what politicians call core American values. Francis Scott Key's poem was written to immortalize the siege of Fort McHenry, Maryland, during the War of 1812—a silly war, a minor war, a war that ended in what was at best a tie. (The British torched the White House and smashed our hopes of gobbling up Canada. We got to keep our independence.) The poem lends itself to mishearing, from the traditional "José, can you see" opening, through "O, sadists that stars spank," to the closing "Orlando D. Free and Homer D. Brave."

Congress designated "The Star-Spangled Banner" our national anthem during the Hoover Administration, when the country's judgment was impaired by clinical depression. The relevant bill—whose sponsor hoped to pro-

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mote the tourist trade in his district, which included Fort McHenry—was rejected three times by the House before it finally passed, on a slow day. It was supported by the "Americanism" busybodies of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Legion but opposed by music teachers—an important group at a time when pianos were more common than phonographs. The complaints then were identical to the complaints now: too martial, too irritating, too hard to sing.

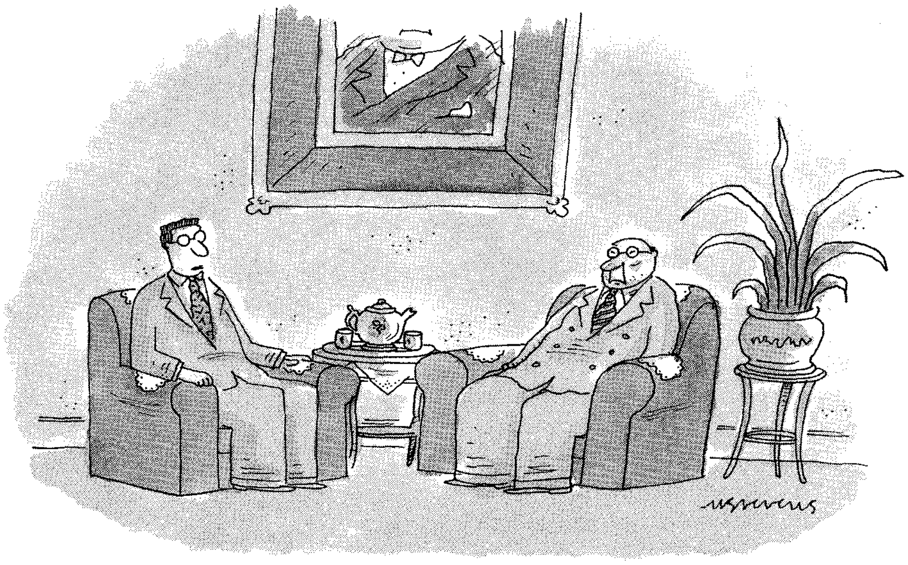
What's the alternative? Mr. T suggests "America the Beautiful"—the music teachers' choice back in 1930, by the way. It's nice, but, like so many nice things, it's also wimpy. The best that can be said for it is that it's more singable than the incumbent. A third contender—"America (My Country, 'Tis of Thee)"—has O.K. words, but the tune is the same as that of "God Save the Queen." This would make for an unusually severe "Is there an echo in here?" problem during joint appearances by Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. How about "This Land Is Your Land"? Plenty of progressive-school pupils already think Woody Guthrie's populist jingle is the national anthem, but the tune is a little too Barney the Dinosaurish, and the lyrics have a musty, Popular Front feeling about them.

Our country has at hand what is perhaps the greatest patriotic hymn ever written: "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." But secularists would object that it is too God-filled, and Southerners—white Southerners, at least—would complain that the vineyards it advocates trampling were their vineyards. ("The Star-Spangled Banner" was also popular with the Union Army, but never mind.) Perhaps "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" could be twinned with "Dixie," as in the Elvis Presley version, but "Dixie" has its own problems. Anyhow, serious countries do not have national medleys.

This space would like to offer a recommendation of its own: "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing." James Weldon Johnson, a poet of the Harlem Renaissance, wrote it, in 1900, for a Lincoln's Birthday celebration. It is already a national anthem of sorts; its alternative title, in fact, is "The Negro National Anthem." Its tune (by J. Rosamond Johnson, the poet's brother) is stirring, and so are its words. The opening verse, the one that would be sung at ballgames, goes, in part:

> Lift ev'ry voice and sing,
> Till earth and heaven ring.
> Ring with the harmonies of liberty . . .
> Sing a song full of the faith that the
> dark past has taught us,
> Sing a song full of the hope that the
> present has brought us;
> Facing the rising sun of our new day
> begun,
> Let us march on till victory is won.

No bombast, no boasting, no wimpishness—just good, solid values that are both American and universal. How about it, Ted? —HENDRIK HERTZBERG



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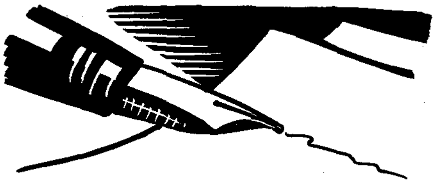

GOD IN THE GHETTO

There's something unseemly about politicians lining up to praise faith-based interventions in the lives of poor children ("In God They Trust," by Joe Klein, June 16th). As I recall it, you don't get points for standing back and lauding the work of the Good Samaritan; you get points only for work you do yourself. Yet for twenty years political leaders of both parties have conspired in establishing policies that have left the poor further and further behind. And now they declare that it's up to God to rescue the perishing. As the Church Lady might put it, "How *convenient!*"

Peter Laarman
Senior Minister, Judson Memorial Church
New York City

After reading Joe Klein's article, I was prepared to believe that faith-based social programs might be so singularly effective that they deserve government support. Then I read "The Lost Man," by Douglas Preston, in the same issue and discovered that a coalition that included conservative Christians was instrumental in getting the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act passed because it hoped to prevent anthropological research from undermining creation myths. Of course I would like government to support social programs that work, but not at the cost of failing to advance knowledge. Can we have it both ways?

Matthew J. Kiefer
Boston, Mass.

HEMOPHILIACS AND AIDS

In response to Robert K. Massie's article ("Blood Feud," June 16th) about Elaine DePrince's book, "Cry Bloody Murder," I'd like to point out that the National Hemophilia Foundation (N.H.F.), since its founding, in 1948, has always worked with the interests of the bleeding-disorders community in mind. Throughout the AIDS crisis, our board of directors has consisted of several people with hemophilia as well as parents and other relatives of children with hemophilia. A number of these board members have lost their lives or lost loved ones to AIDS. Therefore, to suggest that the N.H.F. did anything other than act with the interests of the bleeding-disorders community in mind is to suggest that individuals making decisions for the organization at that time intentionally set out to bring tragedy into their own lives. The AIDS crisis has taught us, and the nation as a whole, many important lessons that continue to guide the N.H.F.'s work today. We are focussed intently on improving the safety of the nation's blood supply and blood products, insuring that legislation compensates members of the hemophilia community who have been affected by H.I.V. disease, fostering research on the improved care of inherited bleeding disorders and their complications, and—ultimately—finding a cure.

Raymond W. Stanhope
President, National Hemophilia Foundation
Sugarland, Texas

In the early and middle eighties, I attended lectures and read papers touting the idea that the natural history of H.I.V. infection was less lethal in hemophiliacs who received contaminated blood products than in other H.I.V.-infected patients. My opinion of this hypothesis is that it is an example of wishful thinking, which might be more readily excused than the greed or ignorance that Mr. Massie alleges was involved in the reported tragedies. Nonetheless, his story demonstrates that wishful thinking is a very dangerous trap for those of us who are confronting a novel problem. He reminds us all that the first principle of medicine, *primum non nocere* ("the first thing is to do no harm"), must supersede all other concerns while we apply rational scientific methods to solving unanswered clinical problems.

Michael H. Kroll, M.D.
Houston, Texas

A SMALL VICTORY

Martin Amis's assertion that the tennis star Tim Henman is the "first human being called Tim to achieve anything at all" (The Talk of the Town, June 16th) can be refuted in one small word: Tiny.

Robert Besen
New York City

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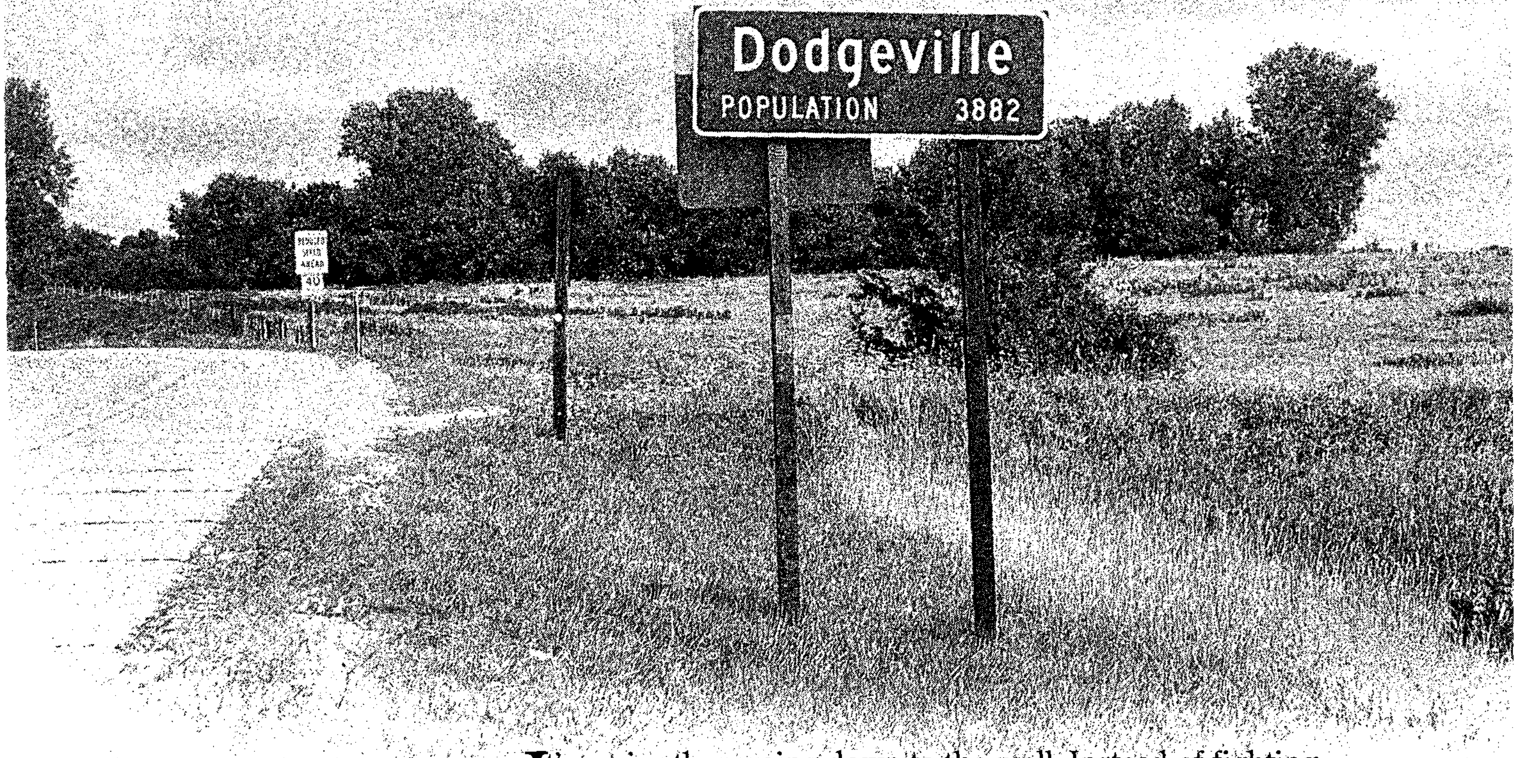

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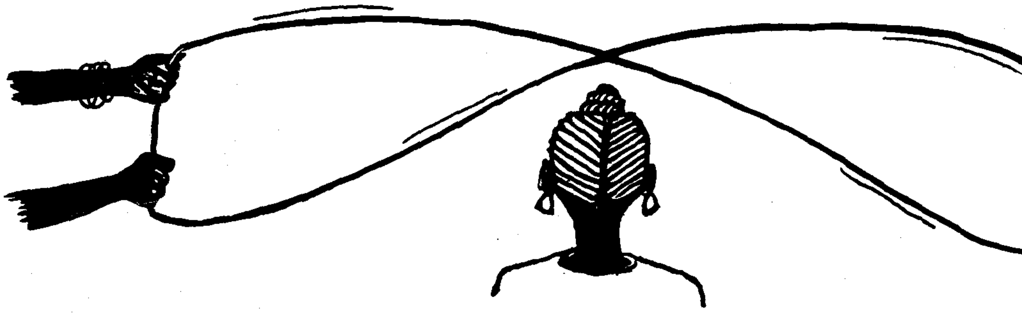


THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Ah, Wilderness!—The National Asian American Theatre Company presents O'Neill's 1933 comedy. Previews July 18-20. Opens July 22 at 6:30. (Mint, 311 W. 43rd St. 505-3003.)

Misalliance—Shaw's 1909 comedy, in a Roundabout Theatre staging directed by David Warren. Previews begin July 18. (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

1776—The 1969 musical by Sherman Edwards (music and lyrics) and Peter Stone (book). Directed by Scott Ellis. Previews begin July 16. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Sugar Down Billie Hoak—Brian Silberman's drama about two homeless teens, set in the New York subway at night, comes with a strong-language/graphic-sex warning. In previews. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-5820.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Always . . . Patsy Cline—Not quite a revue, not quite a play, this spirited and Nashville-slick celebration of the late, great country singer is, rather, a streamlined song-delivery device: Tori Lynn Palazola, who plays Cline, sings twenty-one songs in a mere two hours. The show is based on Cline's relationship with a fan in Houston, played with large-hearted gusto by Margo Martindale. Palazola doesn't sound exactly like Patsy, but she's good at doing Patsy, and more than good when it comes to the slower numbers. The unsung, as it were, heroes of the production are the six members of the backup band, titans of twang all. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

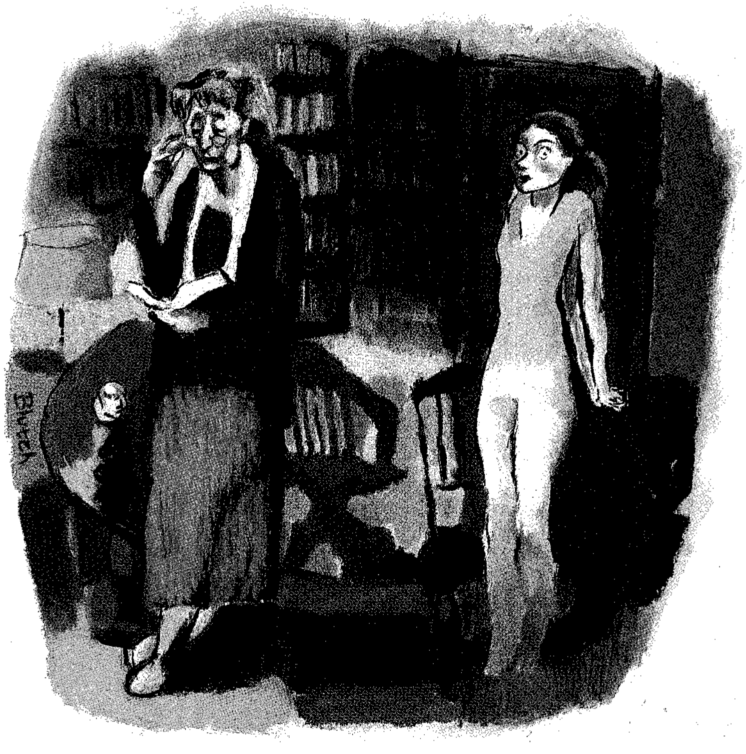
Annie—Can the powerhouse waif find another bonanza in this twentieth-anniversary revival of her Broadway musical? With eight-year-old Brittny Kissinger wearing the red fright wig, anything is possible: no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the New York public. Directed by Martin Charnin. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

As Bees in Honey Drown—In Douglas Carter Beane's comic indictment of America's obsession with fame, J. Smith-Cameron is hilarious as a cultural arbiter whose fabricated personality is, as an adoring Saks salesman (T. Scott Cunningham) puts it, "a mixture of every woman I've ever loved in a movie." The script, which has been given a vivid production by the Drama Dept., is a gleeful bon mot-filled éclair whose satirical power sours only when, every once in a while, it takes itself too seriously. Cunningham and Mark Nelson are both delightful in multiple supporting roles. With Bo Foxworth, as the young novelist who falls under Smith-Cameron's spell. Mark Brokaw directed. The show reopens at the Lucille Lortel on July 15. (121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			16	17	18	19
20	21	22				

Barrymore—Christopher Plummer's rich, unmiked voice hits every note of sarcasm and self-loathing in William Luce's rambunctious script as he perfectly captures the grief behind the old ham's gallant frivolity. Well directed by Gene Saks. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Bermuda Avenue Triangle—In this silly farce, a sexy gambler on the skids (Joseph Bologna) returns the zing to the lives of two elderly women, a Jew (Renée Taylor) and a Catholic (Nanette Fabray), whose sullen daughters have put them out to pasture in a Las Vegas retirement home. Bologna and Taylor's script traffics in the kind of cookie-cutter stereotypes that rate high on the matinée-crowd yuk-o-meter. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)



Maria Tucci and Debra Messing, in "Collected Stories."

BLUTCH

Candide—Spectacle substitutes for satire in this revival and revision of the 1956 Leonard Bernstein–Lillian Hellman–Richard Wilbur musical, directed by Hal Prince. Ultimately, the production drowns out all personality, with the exceptions of the expert Andrea Martin, who knows a laugh and how to get it, and Arte Johnson, a little comic who is large on charm. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/19/97.) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Collected Stories—Donald Margulies takes on the subject of literary betrayal in his new play, which stars Maria Tucci as a distinguished short-story writer and Debra Messing as a graduate student who absorbs her professor's lessons all too well. The pair are well directed by Lisa Peterson, and Tucci is especially good at expressing the various degrees of heartache that inevitably come to all mentors. (6/2/97) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

A Doll's House—A thrilling version of Ibsen's play, imported from the West End. Anthony Page's scrupulous, sensitive direction catches all the music and irony in the collusion between Nora (in a masterly turn by Janet McTeer) and her husband, Torvald (the passionate Owen Teale). (4/14/97) (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Forever Tango—This stepchild of Vegas and Buenos Aires gets everything right, from the basic ingredients (sex, pomade) to the big emotions (e.g., the weltschmerz of the bandonion players). One after another, the acrobatic couples flaunt their scissor steps with lubricious joy. But the real treat is the character dancing: it's a big surprise to encounter so many styles—suave, measured, sleazy, torrid, muscular, slapstick—and such a variety of song-length minidramas. Created and directed by Luis Bravo. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

The Gin Game—Julie Harris and Charles Durning shine in the National Actors Theatre's funny, poignant revival of D. L. Coburn's 1977 play, about two elderly people who discover an antidote to their loneliness in a card game. Charles Nelson Reilly directed. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—Writer-director Moisés Kaufman renders the playwright's trials from edited transcripts, interposing passages from letters, Wilde's writings, and other people's memoirs and commentaries. The result, thanks to Kaufman's clever (if occasionally self-indulgent) direction and a strong, versatile cast—especially Michael Emerson, in the title role—is powerful and surprisingly theatrical. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's memory play, about a young woman (Mary-Louise Parker) who comes of age too quickly under the tutelage of her pedophile uncle (David Morse), is a clear-eyed marvel. (Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

Ice Factory 97—The second offering in the SoHo Think Tank's summer series is "Sealove, Manager," a punk/hip-hop musical by Sander Hicks. July 17-19 at 7. The festival continues through Aug. 24. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 966-4844.)

Jekyll & Hyde—Enjoyable bombast, loosely based on the Robert Louis Stevenson novel. With music by Frank Wildhorn, lyrics and a book by Leslie Bricusse, and solid direction by Robin Phillips. (5/12/97) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Jest a Second!—James Sherman's new sequel to his 1991 Jewish-family comedy, "Beau Jest," in a Jewish Repertory Theatre production. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes July 20.)

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—In this romantic comedy of manners, set in Atlanta in 1939, Alfred Uhry stays true to a Southern sense of propriety: he takes on an unsavory topic (anti-Semitism among the Jewish upper crust) without dwelling on it long enough to offend anyone, and, like a practiced host, he shows you a good time without taxing you. Ron Lagomarsino directed. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

The Life—This new musical, about the oldest profession in Times Square (before it became known as the new Times Square) and the men who profit from its practitioners, is a cynical, poisonous concoction, featuring phony funk, fake blues, overcooked pop, and a cartoonish, insulting book. The cast includes some good singers, notably Lillias White and Pamela Isaacs. (5/12/97) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

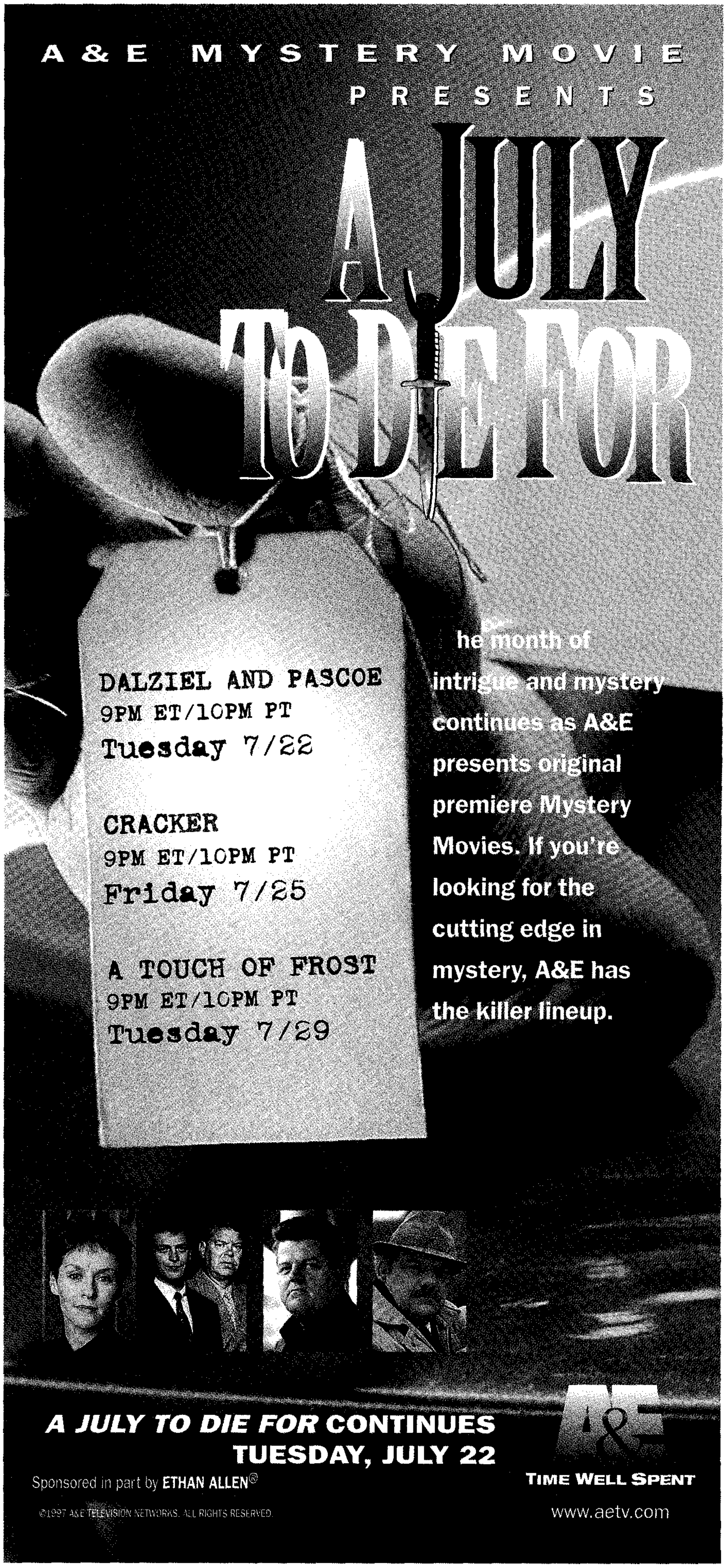
Lincoln Center Festival 97—"Les Danaïdes," an outdoor production of a reconstruction, by the Romanian director Silviu Purcarete, of Aeschylus' "The Suppliant Maidens." Through July 20. (Damrosch Park.) . . . ¶ "Woza Afrika: After Apartheid," a series of plays by South African playwrights. July 16-18 at 8, July 19 at 2 and 8, and July 20 at 3: "Bergville Stories," by Duma Ndlovu. (John Jay Theatre, Tenth Ave. at 58th St.) . . . July 22 at 7: "On My Birthday," by Aubrey Sekhabi. Through July 27. (LaGuardia Concert Hall, 65th St. at Amsterdam Ave.) . . . July 22 at 9:30: "White Men with Weapons," by Greig Coetzee. Through July 27. (LaGuardia Concert Hall.) . . . ¶ "Umabatha: The Zulu Macbeth," a revised and expanded version of Welcome Msomi's 1969 Shakespeare-inspired work, which incorporates traditional Zulu dance, storytelling, and music, and is set in early-nineteenth-century Africa. July 21-22 at 8. Continues through July 27. (New York State Theatre.) (For more information, call 875-5030.)

Mass Appeal—From the Irish Repertory Theatre, a revival of Bill C. Davis's 1980 play about two priests (Tony Coleman and Paul McGrane) with a problem. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

Mere Mortals and Others—Six short plays by David Ives, who created the wonderful "All in the Timing." Only two are new, but they are Ives at his clever best. "Time Flies" is about the short life of two mayflies—only one day to grow up and get it on before going to the great beyond—and the two actors who play them, Anne O'Sullivan and Arnie Burton, are perfectly buggy. "Dr. Fritz; or, The Forces of Light" is a piece of insanity set somewhere south of the border, and Nancy Opel, woman of a hundred lunatic accents, gives an inspired performance as a *loca* local and as a mad German doctor. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

My Night with Reg—The New Group wraps up its season with British playwright Kevin Elyot's 1995 comedy about a group of six gay friends. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes July 26.)

No Strings Attached—Todo con Nada presents a retrospective of the works of Rich-



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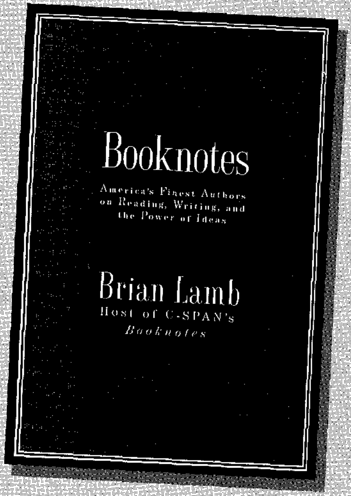
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ard Foreman. (NADA, 167 Ludlow St., south of Houston St. For tickets and schedule information, call 479-7989. Closes Aug. 3.)

Notions in Motion—Jeremy Dobrish's very loose adaptation of Pirandello's "Each in His Own Way" consists of some very funny sketches stitched together by long stretches of overblown blather, nearly redeemed by a surprise ending that subverts the entire notion of theatre and theatrical truth. The cast of this Adobe Theatre Company production, wittily directed by Mr. Dobrish, is for the most part terrific. The show reopens at the American Jewish Theatre on July 16. (307 W. 26th St. 560-7387.)

P.S. 122—July 17-20 at 7:30: "Live Girls on Stage!," an interactive work in progress from performance artists Rae C. Wright, Kirsten Ames, and others. . . . ¶ July 18-19 at 10:30: "Come Clean," Jeff Weiss and Carlos Ricardo Martinez's "new musical epic of sex and survival," hosted by Mr. Weiss. Through July 26. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

Queens Blvd.—A gay-roommate comedy by Paul Corrigan. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 239-6200.)

Student Body Assembly—The performance artist Holly Hughes is joined by graduates of her Performance Artists Correspondence School and by members of Future Homosexuals of America. Mondays only, through July 28. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

Tap Dogs—Australia's work-booted tap troupe. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Tartuffe—Molière's comedy is the first of two outdoor productions by the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 914-265-9575. Closes July 20.)

Tell-Tale—Theatre Couture puts a drag spin on Edgar Allan Poe, in a comic thriller starring Sherry Vine and Jackie Beat. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Closes Aug. 3.)

Those Left Behind—A psychological mystery by Ben Bettenbender, starring Rob Sedgwick and Janis Dardaris. (Theatre 3, at 311 W. 43rd St. 246-5877.)

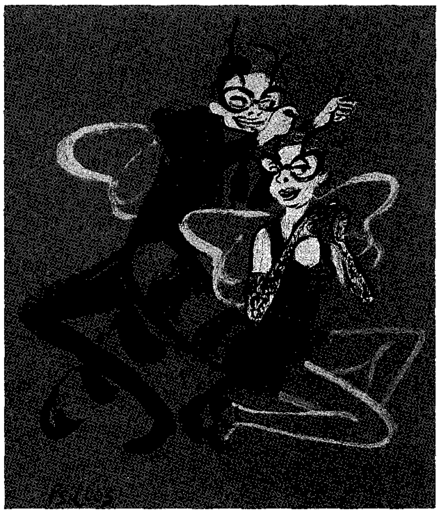
Titanic—Though this musical about history's most tragic maiden voyage contains no small number of historical and theatrical misjudgments, it nevertheless manages to take you very close to the heart of the matter, and it qualifies as a genuine addition to American musical theatre. Richard Jones directed. (5/12/97) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Two Divas & the Dog—A black nationalist, a black feminist, and a woman convinced she's the daughter of God make up the cast of characters in a comedy by Kira Arné. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 290-8150. Closes July 20.)

The Two Gentlemen of Verona—Shakespeare's comedy, presented by the American Globe Theatre. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 869-9809. Closes July 27.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **FULL GALLOP:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JOSEPH GABRIEL: MAGIC ON BROADWAY:** Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200. . . . **VICTOR/VICTORIA:** Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.



Arnie Burton and Anne O'Sullivan, in "Mere Mortals and Others."

DEMETRIOS PSILLOS

DANCE

The Royal Ballet—The premier British company brings a trio of programs (and ballerina Darcy Bussell) for its first New York performances in three years. July 18-19 at 8: "Prince of the Pagodas." . . . ¶ July 20 at 8: "Cinderella." . . . ¶ July 22 at 8: "La Valse," "Daphnis and Chloë," "La Fin du Jour," and "Pavane pour une Infante Défunte." (Metropolitan Opera House. 875-5030. Through July 27.)

Pilobolus—This summer, the Vermont sextet is showing off a stellar rookie (Tamieca McCloud), several new dances ("Gnomon, "Solo"), and a few old favorites (including "Walklyndon," from 1971, and "Alraune," from 1975). (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. July 16-18 at 8 and July 19 at 2 and 8.)

Dances for Wave Hill—The Bronx garden continues its summer series of site-specific choreography: Maia Claire Garrison and her M'Zawa Dance collaborate with saxophonist and jazz scion Ravi Coltrane and Junior Wedderburn's Ancient Vibrations. Leah Stein also performs. (W. 249th St. at Independence Ave., the Bronx. For information, call 718-549-3200. July 16 at 6:30 and July 20 at 5.)

Noche Flamenca—Soledad Barrio joins Bruno Argenta (replacing Barrio's injured husband Martin Santangelo) to anchor this eight-member troupe of dancers, singers, and guitarists as it brings the passionate vocabulary of flamenco (the proud carriage, flashing hands, declarative boot work, intensely focussed gazes) to the intimate Theatre 80. (80 St. Marks Pl. 279-4200. July 16-19 and July 22 at 8, and July 20 at 3. Through Aug. 17.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—July 15-17 at 8, July 18 at 8:30, and July 19 at 2 and 8:30: The Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. . . . ¶ July 17-18 at 8:15, July 19 at 5, and July 20 at 7: Lakshmi, the Madras native who specializes in bharata natya. (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 413-243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Ween—On last year's "Twelve Country Greats," Dean and Gene Ween sank their fangs into the ankle of country-and-Western music, revealing themselves to be master parodists. Much of the album is inspired, and, as with their 1994 breakthrough, "Chocolate and Cheese," you just can't stop listening. Their new disk, "The Mollusk," offers more of their zany, Zappa-esque irreverence. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 741-0391. July 16 at 8.)

The Marvelettes / The Chiffons—Two immortal girl groups. (MetroTech Commons, Flatbush Ave. at Myrtle Ave., Brooklyn. No tickets necessary. July 17 at noon and 1.)

Joe Ely—This gritty singer-songwriter formed the infamous seventies group the Flatlanders with fellow Texans Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Butch Hancock. He's still a square peg caught in country rock's round holes. (Castle Clinton, Battery Park. July 17 at 6:30. Free tickets, which are required, will be distributed at 5.)

Counting Crows / The Wallflowers / Bettie Serveert—Lead singer Adam Duritz still sounds like Van Morrison, and he has the kind of petulant ego that most pop stars take years to develop, but there's no getting around the fact that his band's début album, "August and Everything After," was an inspired collection of soulful, melodic rock. Last year's sophomore effort, "Recovering the Satellites," hit the charts at No. 1, but it lacked the charm of its predecessor. / By now, everyone knows that Jakob Dylan has a famous dad whom he won't talk about—he's his own man, gosh darn it. The irony, of course, is that his band sounds like Dad's old backing group, The Band. Live, the Wallflowers are a competent (if a tad enervating) act. / This snappy quartet from Amsterdam plays deeply satisfying garage rock with a lean, let's-make-a-record-in-a-day sound—a sunny alternative to a lot of overproduced American grunge. (Jones Beach Theatre. 516-221-1000. July 17-18 at 7:30.)

Bruce Cockburn—Over the past twenty-five years, the folky Canadian rocker has lent his gritty passion and fierce intelligence to matters both personal and political. In this performance, he collaborates with writer Robert Olen Butler. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. July 17 at 8:30.)

Cyrille Neville and the Uptown All-Stars—In an evening of reggae-flavored music. With dub poet Everton Sylvester. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Brooklyn. No tickets necessary. July 18 at 7:30.)

Run On—makes street-fighting alt-pop that sounds as though it were written and recorded in an afternoon, but the band is altogether too ingenious and brainy to qualify as your average slacker combo. Live, it's been known to make a mighty impressive noise. With the big, ugly raunch rock of Royal Trux. (Westbeth Theatre Center. July 18 at 8.)

John Hiatt and the Nashville Queens—While critics have been singing Hiatt's praise for decades, it's been mostly country artists who've turned his rootsy songs into hits. His new band, the Nashville Queens, melts the cheese of most country tunes with the twin Hiatt trademarks, intelligence and wit. With Martin Sexton. (Central Park SummerStage. No tickets necessary. July 19 at 3.)

The Offspring—These Orange County skateboard thrashers have a knack for contagious, skillfully arranged songs with funny, self-deprecating wordplay—they're not your garden-variety punks. With D-Generation. (Roxy, 515 W. 18th St. 307-7171. July 19 at 7.)

Supertramp—"Breakfast in America," this long-forgotten English art-rock combo's breakthrough record, came out in 1979. Their current tour might be called "Stewed Prunes in America." (Jones Beach Theatre. July 19 at 8.)

Paul Anka—He's written more than eight hundred songs, and it's frightening to think how many of them are lodged permanently in our brains. There's "Puppy Love," "Put Your Head on My Shoulder," "(You're) Having My Baby," and, most important of all, the theme for "The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson." (Westbury Music Fair. 516-334-0800. July 19 at 8 and July 20 at 7.)

Africa Mondo Festival—A celebration of the African-American diaspora, featuring a traditional marketplace and musicians from Cameroon, Senegal, and French Guiana. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Brooklyn. No tickets necessary. July 20 at 2.)

The Andy Statman Quartet—Statman, a clarinet and mandolin virtuoso, is an American visionary. Although he has immersed himself in Eastern European klezmer music, he's more than willing to incorporate jazz, country, and other domestic sounds into the Old World mix. With the award-winning bluegrass pickings of the Del McCoury Band. (Central Park SummerStage. No tickets necessary. July 20 at 3.)

"Expresiones Latinas"—Part of the Lincoln Center Festival 97. July 21 at 8: The fine Bahian singer Gal Costa. July 22 at 8: Two Cuban bands—the streetwise NG La Banda, which has made the salsa offshoot *timba* a dance staple in Havana, and Bamboleo, a young twelve-piece salsa outfit—in their United States début. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030.)

Jazz Master Class with Dick Hyman and Derek Smith—Maybe there's something that Hyman and Smith don't know about jazz piano styles, from ragtime to the current mainstream. If they reveal the slightest shortcoming, please alert us. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. July 21 at 8:15.)

"Harlem Renaissance"—Pianist-historian Dick Hyman and the jazz traditionalists of the Jim Cullen band present twenties-era music by Fats Waller, W. C. Handy, Duke Ellington, and others; they'll also début a new arrangement of James P. Johnson's pioneering 1928 concert piece, "Yamekraw." (92nd Street Y. July 22 at 8.)

Tina Turner / Cyndi Lauper—She's still got the legs (as evidenced by her deal with Hanes), but the voice and the material have developed a few runs. Still, how often do you get to

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see a real, honest-to-God legend? / "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," "Time After Time," "Money Changes Everything"—after fourteen years, these titles read like painfully ironic commentary. Lauper soldiers on, the sine qua non of eighties kitsch, but now, without her helium hiccups, she sounds oddly like Doris Day. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. July 22 at 8. Performances continue through July 30.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—July 16: **Jill Sobule, Lori Carson,** and **Maggie Estep.** Sobule is a feisty post-punk feminist whose work is a hybrid of Liz Phair and Gertrude Stein; her minor hit, "I Kissed a Girl," was one of last year's best singles. Listening to singer-songwriter Carson's monologues makes you feel like you're eavesdropping—you know you should leave, but you're riveted by the stark, beautiful sadness of her voice and her lyrics. Estep is a downtown poet, fledgling novelist, and spoken-word artist. July 19: The long-running singer-songwriter roundtable "In Their Own Words," featuring former NRBQ guitarist **Al Anderson** and British folk-rocker **Al Stewart** ("Year of the Cat," "Time Passages").

Space, at Irving Plaza.

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—What with their Marlboro Man looks and their slithering, down-and-dirty velvet metal (as it's been called), **Girls Against Boys** (July 18) have an effortless sex appeal that most indie bands would trade their well-studied geek cool for in a minute. **Railroad Jerk** (also July 18) has a refreshing pre-grunge sound that suggests the Violent Femmes and Camper Van Beethoven with some harmonica and hobo rhymes thrown in. It's smart and funny, and it looks like one of the combos that used to appear in the "Cute Band Alert" section of *Sassy.* July 19: **Les Savy Fav,** fronted by the charismatic Gibb Slife, and **Cinnamon,** whose waifish female singer and candy-coated New Wave sound make them the next best thing to the Cardigans.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving. **Modern English** comes to town on July 22 on the strength of their 1983 hit "I Melt with You," which recently popped up in a Burger King commercial.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Texas bluesman **Guitar Shorty** (July 18-19) cut his first singles in the late fifties, around the time that Otis Rush and Buddy Guy were making their débuts. But recording tape has never fully captured the excitement of his live act.

Coney Island High, 15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959)—Experience proto-industrial, scalp-exfoliating hardcore on July 18 with **Foetus** and **Unsane.**

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. On July 18, former Bangles front woman **Susanna Hoffs** headlines an evening of singer-songwriters, including Julia Simon, Jenifer Jackson, and Jake. July 19: Cool, noirish instrumental rock with **Lazy Boy** and **Lars Vegas.** The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—The wacky, Bacharach-influenced glam pop of **Space** lights up the house on July 16. The Liverpool band's début album, "Spiders," is irresistibly effervescent: songs like the strong single "Female of the Species" and the escapist "Dark Clouds" bubble with élan. July 17: The New Orleans trio **Better Than Ezra** specializes in plodding power chords and generic sing-along choruses like "Hey-hey-ah!" and "Good, good, so good," all of which makes the band perfect fodder for the college-football crowd. With Ednaswap. July 18: You might say that **Jane Siberry** has a multiple personality. "Bound by the Beauty," the singer's 1989 album, was ripe with schoolgirl charm (one track was called "Everything Reminds Me of My Dog"). "When I Was a Boy," the album after that, was a moody art-rock opus. "Maria" (1995) had a piano-and-muted-trumpet palette, and it almost qualified as jazz. Siberry has since launched Sheeba, her own record label, and her forthcoming release is titled "A Day in the Life." July 19: Roots rock with a dash of New Orleans from **Cowboy Mouth,** along with harmony-laden country pop from the pride of Gainesville, Florida, **Sister Hazel.** July 22: Retro-pop enfant terrible Karl Wallinger and his band, **World Party,** have reëmerged after four years with a finely crafted new album, "Egyptology."

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Three great local acts drop in on July 17: **Come** (post-grunge swoon), **Steve Wynn** (former Dream Syndicate front man), and **Babe the Blue Ox** (two-fisted quirkiness). July 18-19: Two nights of avant rock, dance, and dub, with, among others, **Arto Lindsay, Chris Whitley,** the **Ladybug Transistor,** and **Silver Apples.**

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—English techno meets Belgian art rock on July 17 with **Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine** and **Deus.** July 18: Topnotch singer-songwriter **Kevin Salem** has played guitar for Freedy Johnston and Yo La Tengo, and his solo début, "Soma City," a collection of forlorn folk-rock gems, was a certified critics' favorite. July 19: **Girls Against Boys** (see Brownies).

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—In the seventies, while many of his R. & B. peers were blissfully succumbing to disco fever, singer-pianist (and poet-novelist) **Gil Scott-Heron** (July 18) was fusing jazz and funk textures with sobering political rap. He's been on tour ever since.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—On July 22, a cool double bill: the exquisite Icelandic pop of **Gus Gus** is paired with the low-key trip-hop of England's **Lamb.**

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—July 16: The heavy, hard-edged Brit pop of **Swervedriver** and the fierce wall-of-guitar rock of **Poster Children.** July 18 brings an evening that is the musical equivalent of "Scream": the kiddie pop of **Bis; Kenickie,** which is rapidly becoming the next Spice Girls; and **Tuscadero,** D.C.'s favorite coed combo. July 19: **Cracker.** Last year's "The Golden Age" had songwriter David Lowery juggling, with newfound vigor, the same disparate sensibilities—white-trash woe and post-slacker doldrums—that defined the group's two prior disks (and Lowery's career with the cult favorite Camper Van Beethoven). This may be the Golden Age, but he's still wondering where he fits in. ("I hate my generation.") Still, if he's depressed, at least he's finally earning a living. July 22: **Fish,** the former front man of the eighties progressive rockers Marillion.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—July 17: Laconic, country-flavored rockers **Scud Mountain Boys** and local pop heroes **Five Chinese Brothers** head up a show called "Americanapalooza," with **Bruce Henderson,** Long River Train, Mr. Henry, the Lazy Stars, and Todd Thibaud. July 19: Lounge rock with **Combustible Edison.**

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Young baritone crooner **Tom Postilio** is at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room through July 19. Dining.

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—The **Jimmy Heath** quartet is in July 17-19. To watch saxophonist Heath at work is to observe the mind-body split in action: while standing stock still, his face an inscrutable mask, he extracts gorgeous melodies and heartbreaking tones from his horns. Guitarist **John Abercrombie,** organist **Dan Wall,** and drummer **Adam Nussbaum** are in July 22-23. Mondays are reserved for the **Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra,** which features the bandleader's husband, flutist and saxophonist **Lew Tabackin.** Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. Through July 20: Acoustic guitarist **Earl Klugh.** Vocalist **Regina Belle** starts July 22. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through July 20: **Randy Weston's African Rhythms.** With one foot in Africa and the other in the Big Apple, pianist and composer Weston combines the rhythmic diversity of the African-American diaspora with the lyrical smarts of New York bebop. His music mingles percussive energy with pointillistic poetry, and the results can be bracing—this is world music that never devalues its sources. Starting July 22: The **Donald Harrison** quartet. Mondays belong to national treasure **Les Paul.**

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Pianist **Mike Le Donne** (July 16-19) knows when to kick off his shoes and when not to. On mid-tempo blues and leisurely ballads, he takes all the time he needs; on bop dashes, he's out of the gate without looking back. His rhythm-mates—bassist **Jon Webber** and the redoubtable drummer **Kenny Washington**—live to generate the perfect groove.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—July 20: The **Herbie Nichols Project.** The underappreciated pianist and composer (1919-63), was a musician's musician who recorded only a handful of times and passed most of his career in obscurity. The work, though, is all golden, with an outsider tinge as well as a formal perfection that rivals Thelonious Monk's. Nichols recorded his tunes only in piano-trio settings, so it'll be a pleasure to hear them fleshed out by a horn-driven band; on its début disk, "Love Is Proximity," the Project proves that it's got his idiosyncrasies down cold.

Lenox Lounge, 288 Lenox Ave., between 124th and 125th Sts. (427-0253)—This Harlem club brings first-rate jazz back north with a vengeance. July 18-19: The extravagant vocalist **Leon Thomas** and his trio. Back in the days when Thomas yodelled his way to

BETH ADAMS

fame, he and his partner, saxophonist Pharoah Sanders, were presenting themselves as musical harbingers of the Age of Aquarius. His vision of imminent peace, love, and brotherhood has presumably altered with time, but not his daring approach to song.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—Through July 19, pianist and vocalist **STEVE ROSS** presents "I Won't Dance," a show of songs popularized by Fred Astaire. Among the accompanying performers are pianist Bruno Casolari and vocalist Karen Murphy.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—July 17: The **SHERMAN IRBY** quartet. Altoist Irby isn't going to make you forget Charlie Parker, but he does have the kind of go-for-broke instincts and wide-open emotionalism that go hand in hand with youthful vigor. The tugging throb in his tone is a sure sign that he's in for the long haul. The **JOHN SNEIDER** quintet is in July 18-19. Stocked to the gills with exciting players, the **JASON LINDNER BIG BAND** holds court every Monday.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The **FRED HERSCH** trio is in through July 20. The agile and lyrical pianist Hersch is a dyed-in-the-wool romantic, but his bittersweet poetry is cloaked in historical knowledge (he's been hip to the glories of Billy Strayhorn for years) and formal strength. Amazingly, for someone so long on the scene (he's worked with everyone from Jane Ira Bloom to Joe Henderson to Toots Thielemans), this is his first Vanguard engagement as a leader. From July 22: The **KENNY BARRON** trio. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—**BILL MAYS** and **CECIL MC BEE** are in through July 19. Mays is Mr. Taste, a cultivated mainstream pianist who has yet to play an inelegant phrase; McBee is an extraordinary and intensely powerful bassist. From July 21: **PETE MALINVERNI** (piano), **NEAL MINER** (bass), and **LEROY WILLIAMS** (drums). Dining.

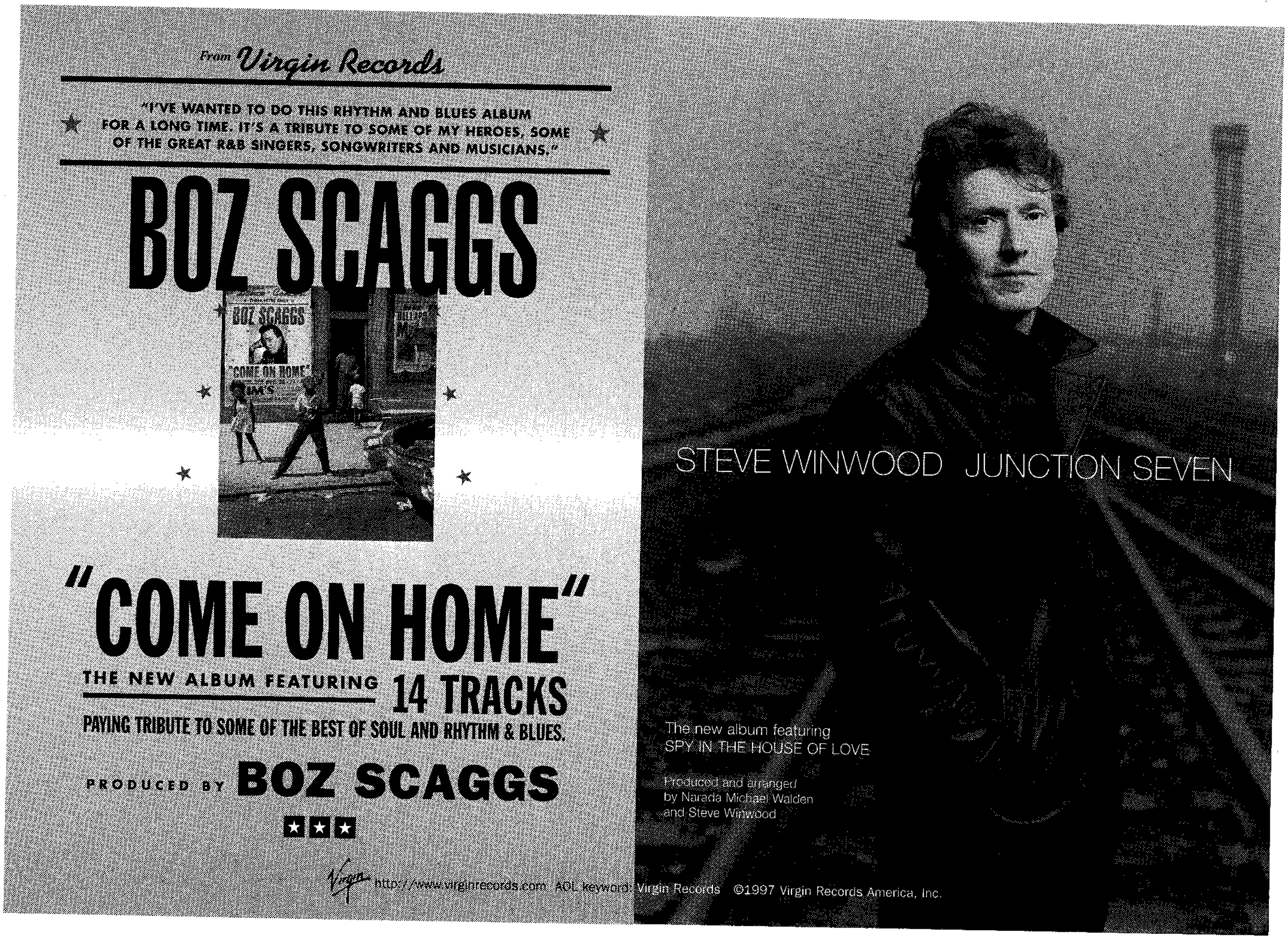
ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Ivan Albright: Magic Realist," a comprehensive retrospective of the Chicago-based painter (1897-1983) of moral rot and deliquescent flesh. The works are far removed from modernist taste, and their hamminess can be tiresome, especially in such a large dose, but they certainly stand out. Remember the 1945 M-G-M version of "The Picture of Dorian Gray"? It was Albright who provided the picture, a grotesque masterpiece that is one of the highlights of this show. His work is icky but compelling, and this is one of the Met's best recent exhibitions of contemporary art. Through Sept. 7. . . . ¶ The museum's collection of Chinese art, one of the finest outside Asia, now has room to glow: after two years of construction, a new series of galleries nearly doubles the exhibition space. These cool, quiet rooms create the ideal atmosphere in which to grasp the rarefied sensibility of imperial Chinese painting, calligraphy, and decorative art. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"Objects of Desire: The Modern Still Life," an exhibition devoted to domestic arrangements, from Cézanne's apples to Warhol's Campbell's soup cans. Through Aug. 26. . . . ¶ Cindy Sherman's career began in the late seventies with her witty series of "Untitled Film Stills," sixty-nine black-and-white photographs in which she poses as the protagonist of a variety of noir films: the starlet standing in the door of her motel room, clutching a Martini; the sex kitten splayed on a bed, wearing a clingy silk slip; the smartly dressed career girl dwarfed by the skyscraper canyon of lower Manhattan. Sherman helped pioneer the exploration of the no man's land between high and low: the source of her imagery isn't Hollywood B movies per se but rather the highly intellectualized reinvention of the genre by such European filmmakers as Visconti and Antonioni. Her blond bombshell isn't Jayne Mansfield; she's Monica Vitti deconstructing Jayne Mansfield, and that's a big difference—the difference between camp and irony. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Paris/The 1890s" examines the fin-de-siècle printmaking of Bonnard, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vuillard, and others. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Stenberg Brothers: Constructing a Revolution in Soviet Design," an excellent summer show of Constructivist film posters. Vladimir and Georgii Stenberg actually achieved in their energetic and vibrantly colored work the unity of formal innovation and mass appeal that the Russian avant-garde aspired to. Though they did posters for Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov, in many other cases it is the posters, not the films they advertised, that have lasted. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "More Than One: Twentieth Century Print Portfolios." Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ The Project 60 room features the work of painters John Currin, Elizabeth Peyton, and Luc Tuymans. Through Sept. 9. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"From Dürer to Rauschenberg: A Quintessence of Drawing." A coöperative venture with Vienna's Albertina Graphics Collection presents masterpieces of draftsmanship, from finished portraits to sketchbook whimsies, by seventeen artists, including Raphael, Rembrandt, Fragonard, Kandinsky, and Beuys. Through Aug. 24. . . . ¶ Large-scale sculpture by the Basque minimalist Cristina Iglesias, who favors forthright urban materials—concrete, iron, glass, etc.—and delicately etched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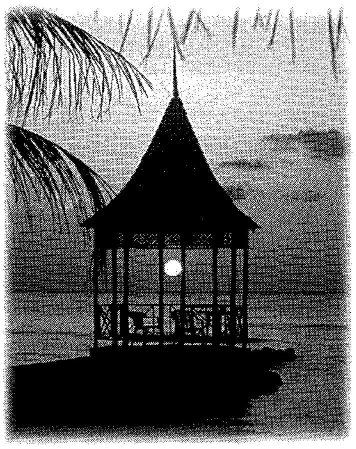

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surfaces. Through Sept. 7. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—“Reversible Destiny: Arakawa/Gins.” A pair of long-term collaborative projects, “The Mechanism of Meaning” and “Reversible Destiny Architecture,” from Rei Arakawa and Madeline Gins, offer a collection of scale models, photographs, and interactive panels that show what can happen when a painter and a poet take on the philosophy of architecture. Through Aug. 31. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

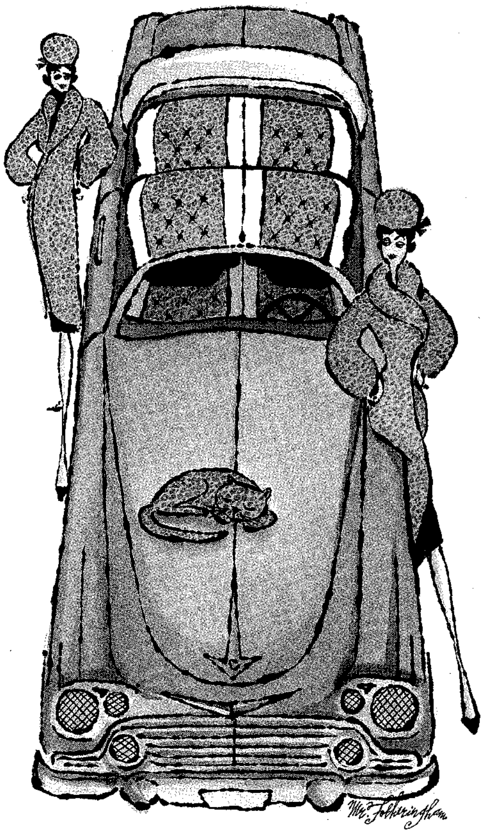
Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—“Keith Haring.” Everybody loves Haring, but he was, in fact, human—a circumstance that seems to have eluded the creators of this breathless beatification posing as a retrospective. There are a few paintings here and there, but most of the space is given over to something reminiscent of the way the Germans restore their great composers' homes: one is permitted to gaze upon (among many other items) the artist's Monkees Fan Club card, his sneakers, his collection of cassettes, his wallet, his cancelled passport. Does it really add to our understanding of Haring's work to see his bill from Mr. Chow? The show is a lavishly designed multimedia extravaganza—meaning there's a video blasting away in nearly every gallery. In one room, a big hole has been ripped out of the wall, and a specially made dance mix, by d.j. Junior Vasquez, plays loudly as a pile of little monitors shows an amateur videotape of the closing night of the Paradise Garage. You had to be there. (For more Haring, see Galleries—Uptown.) Through Sept. 21. . . . ¶ “Frank Lloyd Wright: Designs for an American Landscape, 1922-32,” a meticulously curated exhibition of drawings and exquisitely finished architectural models for five utopian resort projects that the Master envisioned for the American wilderness but that were never built. Through Aug. 31. . . . ¶ “Collection in Context: Rockwell Kent by Night.” Through Sept. 14. . . . ¶ Twenty-five photographs by Larry Fink, of boxers and their camp followers. Through Sept. 7. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—“The Lost World: The Life and Death of Dinosaurs.” Fossils, time lines, and a re-creation of a paleontological dig, displayed in the shadow of a seventy-foot-long reconstruction of a mamenchisaurus. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—“Process on Paper: Recent Acquisitions.” Prints (Lyonel Feininger, Louise Bourgeois, Vito Acconci), drawings (John Singer Sargent, Kiki Smith), and photographs (Roy De Carava, Lorna Simpson) demonstrate the technical range of works on paper. Through Sept. 28. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5, and Saturday evenings until 9.)

Dahesh Museum, 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606)—Most of the work in “The European Experience” is the sort of academic salon painting that gives academic salon painting a bad name: insipid models dressed up in exotic or classical garb and simpering at the viewer. Still, there's some fun to be had here: a disembodied 1804 head of Napoleon, looking a bit like Pee-wee Herman, plastered on a golden ground and surrounded by the laurels of victory, by Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy Trioson; a hunky 1874 Perseus liberating a chunky Andromeda chained to her rock, by Henry-Louis Picou; Charles-Théodore Frère's spectacular sunset on the Nile at Giza, the Pyramids looming. The meticulously detailed “Pompeian Interior” (1882), by Luigi Bazzani, which the painter claimed he based on the latest archeological research, cries out for Anne Baxter and Claudette Colbert to come slinking in. Through Sept. 6. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-5800)—“Driving Fashion: Automobile Fabrics of the 1950s” explores the affinities between women's wear and auto upholstery: examples of auto styling from Detroit's golden era (vinyl bucket seats, in fern with mint-green trim and piping, from the '57 Thunderbird) appear alongside designs of equally forthright color and similarly space-age inspiration by Dior, Norell, and Claire McCardell. Through Oct. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8, and Saturdays, 10 to 5.)



“Driving Fashion: Automobile Fabrics of the 1950s,” at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City (718-204-7088)—Works from every period in the career of the Japanese-American sculptor (1904-88) are installed in a garden and in open-air galleries carved from, and added to, an old photo-engraving factory. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—“Letters from Cairo: Jews and Muslims 800-1500” marks the discovery a hundred years ago of a cache of medieval manuscripts, many of which appear here: a draft of Moses Maimonides's “Guide to the Perplexed”; a book of helpful magic demonstrating, among other things, how to prevent dog bites; a letter from the bilingual (Hebrew and Arabic) poet Judah ha-Levi, praising a lavish gift—a ream of paper. Through Oct. 12. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (369-4880)—“Winslow Homer Wood Engravings.” The painter and Academy member began his career as a magazine illustrator; this exhibition contrasts these early engravings, for *Harper's* and *Ballou's*, among other publications, with later studies for such paintings as "Snap the Whip" and "Waiting for a Bite." Through Aug. 10. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. (873-3400)—"Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village," an exhibition devoted to the African-American and Irish community that was razed to make way for Central Park. Through Nov. 30. . . . ¶ "The Birds of America," a hundred and fifty watercolors by John James Audubon. Through Oct. 5. . . . ¶ "From New York to Salt Lake: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints." A century and a half after the founding of Salt Lake City, this exhibition traces the migrations of the followers of Joseph Smith from upstate New York westward. Through Sept. 14. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Summer hours: unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

"Affinities with the East"—A finely curated exhibition of American abstract painting influenced by Asian art. Mark Tobey (1890-1976) and John McLaughlin (1898-1976) both lived in Japan, absorbing widely different lessons there: the former was influenced by the nation's expressionistic landscape tradition; the latter found inspiration in its austere architectural designs. Agnes Martin and Brice Marden, different as they are, both reflect and refract the aesthetics of Asian calligraphy. There is also fine work by Louise Fishman and Pat Steir. Through Aug. 1. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454.)

"Freak Show"—Sideshow banners ("Alligator Girl," "Ducks with Four Wings," "Albert the Rubber Skinned Man") by Snap Wyatt, Fred Johnson, and other circus artists. Through Aug. 15. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810.)

"Selected Works" / "Early Chinese Pottery"—The new Danese gallery's summer exhibition includes some interesting contemporary work—an exercise in skanky Pop porn by John Wesley, a modest little late Donald Judd, Joe Zucker's retina-searing collage of colored cotton balls—but the real treasures are in the tiny back gallery, where nine superb examples of ancient Chinese pottery are on display. A high-fired gray stoneware jar from the Warring States period (late fifth to third centuries B.C.) is incised with neat geometric designs; a shapely eighteen-inch-tall orange earthenware jar has somehow survived forty-five hundred years in perfect condition. Through July 31. (41 E. 57th St. 223-2227.)

Group Shows—At **haime,** 41 E. 57th St. (888-3550): An agreeable hodgepodge of wildly varied work, ranging from the tacky exuberance of Niki de Saint Phalle's sculpture of a figure reading a newspaper to Julio Larraz's witty satire of Spanish Baroque painting (a basket of fruit with a camera discreetly tucked in one corner) to Adam Straus's brilliant faux-naïve still-life of a vase of gladiolas with a bullet (an actual bullet, embedded in the panel) a moment away from smashing it to bits. Through Aug. 31. . . . **pace wildenstein,** 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292): A rather ill-sorted grab bag juxtaposing the pathetic (recent work by Schnabel and Rauschenberg), the trite (a Calder mobile), and some superb vintage minimalist sculptures; particularly fine is an array of copper plates by Carl Andre (perfect) and a gleaming brass box by Donald Judd. George Condo offers a welcome note of whimsy with his cartoonlike version of a Renaissance allegorical painting, full of high-camp humor, signifying nothing. Through Aug. 22. . . . **ubu,** 16 E. 78th St. (794-4444): A line apiece from Carl Andre (on a postcard), Andy Goldsworthy (of snow, zigzagging up a tree), Robert Mangold (in charcoal, on charcoal), and other artists. Through July 31.

Short List—john griefen and **anne peretz,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606. Both shows through July 29. . . . **keith haring,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. 752-0124. Through Aug. 1. . . . **leonard stokes,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. 319-1996. Through July 30. . . . **michael wetzel,** Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. 397-0669. Through July 25.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

"Margins"—A modest but intelligent group show featuring Conceptualist photo/text works by Sol LeWitt, Robert Smithson, Gordon Matta-Clark, and Vito Acconci. The highlight: a photo documenting Matta-Clark's most ambitious project, "Splitting" (1974), in which the artist literally cut a wooden house in two. Through July 30. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300.)

Group Shows—At **cheim & read,** 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727): A rewarding, agendaless exhibition of sculptures by Lynda Benglis, photographs by Adam Fuss, drawings by Serge Spitzer, and paintings by David Salle. What the works share historically or conceptually is not the issue—they simply look great together. The two early paintings by Salle stand out. Through July 31. . . . **baldacci,** 521 W. 21st St. (463-0919): Sculptures, paintings, and photographs, by St. Clair Cemin, James Hyde, Vik Muniz, and others. Through July 31. . . . **kreps,** 529 W. 20th St. (741-8849): Videos, sculptures, photographs, and installations, by E. V. Day, John Hansel, Andy Harman, Deborah Warner, and Chris Wilder. Through July 27.

Short List—stefan altenburger, Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753. Through Aug. 8. . . . **lawrence anderson** and **eric willmer,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Open Wednesdays through Sundays; both shows through July 20. . . . **tom baldwin,** Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Closed Mondays; through July 31.

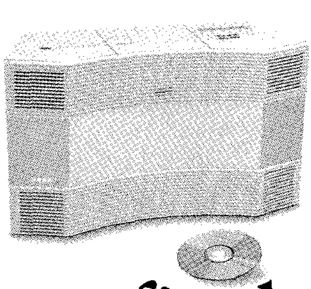
GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Douglas Kolk / Hans Accola—Kolk's drawings and light boxes follow a character he calls Suicide Girl, revelling in the kind of chirpy nihilism that is now a familiar element of post-punk zine culture. What elevates his work above the obvious is his strangely delicate draftsmanship and color sense; here alienation can be devastatingly pretty. Accola's sculptures, on the other hand, are further variations on one of modernism's quintessential inventions, the ready-made. He features some buckets, cinder blocks, a metal folding chair, etc., but his choices are uncompelling. Both shows through Aug. 1. (Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074.)

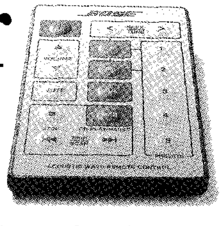
Peter Nagy—"So Much Deathless (A Curated Installation)," a series of tableaux in which the artist, like a connoisseur or a decorator, has assembled various paintings (his own vibrantly hued demi-abstractions as well as works by such friends and relatives as Stephen Mueller and Lee Mullican), furniture, and Asian objets d'art. After running the important Nature Morte gallery in the eighties with Alan Belcher, Nagy moved to India a few years ago. His accessorization of contemporary Western paintings and Eastern objects seems like a wry comment on the tireless Orientalism of people in the art world (at least with respect to décor). Unfortunately, the show is too crowded: you feel like you're strolling through a cramped antique shop. Through July 18. (Klagsbrun, 80 Mercer St. 925-5157.)

Jeff Perrone—Despite its portentous title, "Asia, Africa, and the Americas" is lovely and unpretentious work, a quartet of wall pieces made of handcrafted fabrics (from Mali, Zaire, India, and other far-flung locales), painted on and reconfigured, crazy-quilt-style, with his own bright and allusive glazed-earthenware panels (exotic flowers, decorated feet, Krishna splitting a poppy tree, and so forth). Through Aug. 8. (Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. 941-5777.)

"1970"—A pleasingly tawdry installation by Art Club 2000, a collective of young artists, none



Small as it is, we managed to find room for improvement.



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of whom had been born by that purportedly pivotal year. In one room, a tumulus of black-and-white TVs reduces some of the era's best-known artists (Alex Katz, Carolee Schneemann, Isa Genzken, Vito Acconci, and others, all filmed in a portable studio re-created a few feet away) to a babble of talking heads. Around the corner, a video nook outfitted with groovy red couches offers a more respectful take on the same interviews, in individual doses and living color. Through Sept. 26. (American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St. 941-0401.)

Group Shows—At **a/c project room,** 15 Renwick St. (219-8275): A collection of works related only by the cussedness of their inspirations. Installation artist Kirsten Mosher lays out a white-carpet pedestrian crosswalk; glassblower Josiah McElheny matches duplicates of the glasses in Leonardo's "Last Supper" with his knockoffs of glassware actually available in first-century Palestine; and Michel Auder offers a video "autobiography" that includes footage of a dewy-eyed Eric Bogosian acting zonked. Through July 31. . . . **bravin post lee,** 80 Mercer St. (966-2676): Examples of the grisly-meat school of painting, including one by the genre's master, Francis Bacon, and another by Steve di Benedetto, of what looks like a celestial migraine; with the occasional Frank Stella or Chuck Close to cleanse the palate. Through July 18. . . . **fotouhi cramer,** 560 Broadway (431-1304): Paintings, sculptures, videos, posters, footprints, etc., loosely alluding to drugs, flowers, and the Summer of Love, by Karen Finley, Damien Hirst, Peter Max, Yoko Ono, Roxy Paine, et al. Through Aug. 2. . . . **sean kelly,** 43 Mercer St. (343-2405): Drawings by Ed Ruscha, Juliao Sarmento, Calum Innes, and friends. Through Sept. 5.

Short List—**ian abdulla,** Steele, 420 West Broadway. 941-8388. Through Aug. 2. . . . **mark di suvero,** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. 228-2828. Through Aug. 1. . . . **wade hoefer,** Knowlton, 568 Broadway. 966-2625. Through Aug. 19. . . . **rita j. robillard,** A.I.R., 40 Wooster St. 966-0799. Through July 26.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lillian Bassman—A retrospective of vintage fashion photographs from the forties through the sixties. Through Aug. 1. (Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . ¶ A larger retrospective of fashion work and personal projects runs through Aug. 16 at the Fashion Institute of Technology. (Seventh Ave. at 27th St. 217-5800. Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8; Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Marianne Courville—The artist's first solo show consists of grainily rephotographed frames from her family's home movies of the sixties and seventies: a light image of a tutued, waterskiing showgirl; an ominous sleek black car with a door open, ready for a family spin; an Easter-egg hunt in the woods of upstate New York. The selection is sharp, the compositions are strong, the palette is vivid, and there's a powerful, seductive personal history–public nostalgia dance going on that's very hard to resist. Through Aug. 15. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)

George Daniell—Street images of New York City from the thirties and forties. Through Aug. 1. (Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., at 23rd St. 242-7767. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

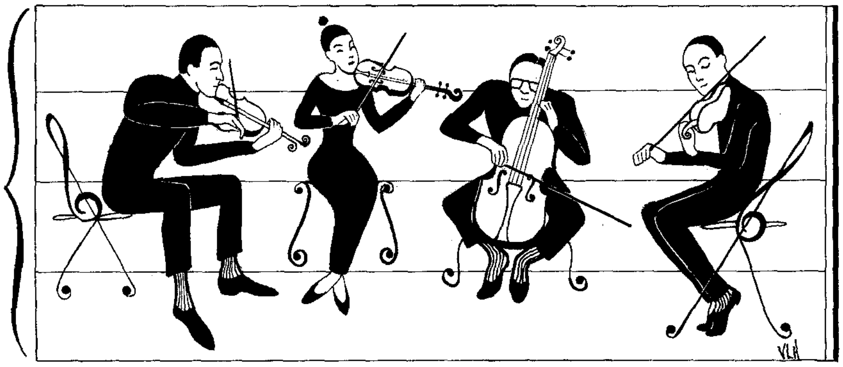
Larry Fink—Pictures from the worlds of boxing, fashion, politics, and Wall Street. Through Aug. 29. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.) . . . ¶ A show of the artist's boxing photographs is at the Whitney Museum, through Sept. 7.

Erich Hartmann—"In the Camps," a quietly thought-provoking, though oddly impassive, recent black-and-white series shot in the silent, ghost-filled barracks, gas chambers, and fenced-off fields of Nazi extermination camps. Through Aug. 9. (Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Closed Mondays, opens Saturdays at noon.)

Lisette Model (1901-83)—A retrospective of the photographer and teacher's career, from the collection of the International Center of Photography. Through Sept. 19. (PaineWebber Building, Sixth Ave. at 52nd St. 713-2885.)

Marc Riboud—The first New York gallery show of the globe-trotting French photojournalist (he once drove a used Land Rover from London to Calcutta) features vintage prints of scenes from Vietnam, Iran, the Soviet Union, China, Africa, and the United States. Through Aug. 1. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010.) . . . ¶ A large show of Riboud's photographs made in China over the past forty years runs through Sept. 14 at the International Center of Photography. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

"About Painting"—A show that brings together widely disparate photographers, concentrating on the work of William Eggleston and Andreas Gursky, with the pointless concept that photography is a painterly medium: well, yes, it has composition, texture, color, and all that, but then so does needlepoint. Still, a series of vintage Eggleston snaps of the Deep South, from the photographer's own collection, is endlessly intriguing. Through Aug. 1. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454.)



The Brentano String Quartet, performing at Bargemusic and Music Mountain.

VIRGINIA HATLEY

"Adolescents"—Inscrutable youth, by Sander, Arbus, Disfarmer, Ross, and others. Through Aug. 15. (Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747. Closed Mondays.)

"Backyards"—The domestic comedy, by, among others, William Eggleston, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Susan Lipper, Richard Misrach, Walter Rosenblum, and Garry Winogrand. Through Aug. 15. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223.)

"New Narratives"—Real-life and staged scenarios by a handful of young artists, including Michael Lewis, Ashley Thayer, Malerie Marder, Mark Steinmetz, and Reuben Cox. Through Aug. 20. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220. Closed Mondays.)

"Water"—This summer's obligatory H_2O-fest looks mighty refreshing, with works on hand by William Henry Fox Talbot, August Sander, Robert Adams, Harry Callahan, Sally Mann, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Emmet Gowin, and Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Through Aug. 29. (Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Closes Fridays at 4.)

Group Show—Works by Uta Barth, Rineke Dijkstra, Tracey Moffatt, and Inez van Lamsweerde. Through Aug. 29. (Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200.)

Short List—**marilyn bridges,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through July 31. . . . **jessica craig-martin and lucas michael,** Boesky & Callery, 51 Greene St. 941-9888. Through July 25. . . . **alex harsley,** June Kelly, 591 Broadway. 226-1660. Through Aug. 1. . . . **george platt lynes,** Wessel and O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. 242-8811. Through Aug. 15. . . . **albert renger-patzsch,** Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223. Through Sept. 10.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

Royal Opera, Covent Garden—Great Britain's leading opera company arrives with Hans Pfitzner's "Palestrina." Tenor Thomas Moser assumes the title role in a cast that also includes soprano Ruth Ziesak, tenors Robert Tear and Anthony Rolfe-Johnson, and baritones Alan Held, Sergei Leiferkus, and Thomas Allen. Christian Thielemann conducts. (Metropolitan Opera House. July 21 at 7. For information about tickets, call 875-5030. Through July 26.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—July 18 at 8: Kurt Masur celebrates his seventieth birthday by conducting several orchestral works—including Strauss's "Till Eulenspiegel" and Sarasate's "Carmen Fantasy" (with violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter)—and a passel of operatic excerpts, featuring baritone Håkan Hagegård and the Royal Opera Chorus. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. . . . **note:** At 6:45, in a pre-concert recital open to ticket holders, members of the Philharmonic and of the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House perform Mendelssohn's Octet.) . . . ¶ July 19-20 at 8: Mr. Masur leads Brahms's Violin Concerto (with Ms. Mutter) and Mendelssohn's "Die Erste Walpurgisnacht," a rarely performed cantata based on a Goethe ballad about nature-worshipping Druids who disguise themselves as devils in order to frighten away invading Christians; with mezzo-soprano Mary Ann McCormick, tenor Carl Halvorson, baritone Nathan Gunn, bass-baritone Stephen Bryant, and the Royal Opera Chorus. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030.) . . . ¶ July 22 at 8: In the first of its free summer concerts in the city's parks, the orchestra performs Glinka's "Russlan and Ludmilla" Overture, Bach's F-Minor Keyboard Concerto (with pianist Cyrus Chestnut, whose jazz trio also offers several selections), and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5. Markand Thakar conducts. (North Meadow, Central Park. For rain-date information, call 875-5709.)

Schola Cantorum Leipzig—Eckhard Budrowitz directs the choir of young women in two different programs. July 17 at 1: An all-Brahms concert, comprising his "Ave Maria" (Op. 12), his Psalm 13 (Op. 27), and three of his choral collections: "Drei Geistliche Chöre" (Op. 37), "Lieder und Romanzen" (Op. 44), and "Vier Gesänge" (Op. 17). (Trinity Church, Broadway at Wall St. Admission by contribution.) . . . ¶ July 20 at 12:15: Works by Mendelssohn, Kerstin Thieme, and Brahms. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. Admission by contribution.)

New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra—The community orchestra performs Mendelssohn's D-Minor Piano Concerto (featuring Amy Suzuki) and Beethoven's Symphony No. 1. David Amado conducts. (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. July 22 at 7:30. Tickets at the door.)

RECITALS

"Music in the Garden"—Outdoor performances of duos by Rossini, Hindemith, and others, performed by cellist Allen Alexander and double-bassist Bryan Gumm. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. July 16 at 7:15.)

"Intimate Immensity"—The première of a staged electro-acoustic work by Morton Subotnick, featuring vocalists Joan La Barbara and Thomas Buckner and Balinese dancer I Nyoman Wenten. (LaGuardia Concert Hall, Amsterdam Ave. at 65th St. July 16 and July 18-19 at 8. For information about tickets, call 875-5030.)

Bargemusic—July 17 at 7:30 and July 20 at 4: Presenting Moszkowski's Suite for Two Violins and Piano, Shostakovich's E-Minor Piano Trio, and Brahms's G-Minor Piano Quartet. . . . ¶ July 18 at 7:30: The Brentano String Quartet offers Schubert's G-Minor Quartet, Beethoven's "Grosse Fuge," and Mozart's Quartet in E-Flat Major (K. 428). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

Summergarden—The Museum of Modern Art's outdoor concert series, which this summer investigates the music of foreign-born composers who moved to the United States, continues with violinist Jennifer Frautschi and pianist Nari Matsuura performing works by Ursula Mamlok, Oleg Felzer, Schoenberg (his Fantasy, Op. 47), Bartók, and Lukas Foss (his "Central Park Reel"). (14 W. 54th St. July 18-19 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

Essex String Quartet—The foursome plays quartets by Brahms (in C Minor) and Haydn (in G Major, Op. 77, No. 1). (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. July 20 at noon.)

Asaf Blasberg—Pianist, performing an all-Schubert program that includes the Sonata in A Major (D. 959). (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. July 20 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

Pomerium—The vocal ensemble, directed by Alexander Blachly, performs high points of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sacred polyphony, by Dufay, Josquin des Prez, and Cipriano de Rore, as well as Palestrina's "Pope Marcellus" Mass, which may have been composed to reflect the Council of Trent's directive that musical counterpoint should not be so florid that it interferes with the intelligibility of texts. (Alice Tully Hall. July 20 at 8. For information about tickets, call 875-5030.)

Benjamin Bagby—The early-music specialist declaims (in Old English) the eighth-century epic "Beowulf," bardic style, accompanying himself with a medieval harp. (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, Lincoln Center. July 20-22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 875-5030.)

Immanuel Davis—Flutist, performing works by Messiaen ("Le Merle Noir"), Philippe Gaubert, and Françaix, with pianist Stephen Gosling. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. July 21 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Florilegium—A British ensemble of early-instrument players, performing chamber works by J. S. Bach, C. P. E. Bach, and Telemann. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. July 22 at 5:45.)

Mickey Thomas Terry—Playing an hour-long recital of organ works by Julius Reubke (his "Sonata on the 94th Psalm"), Bach (his Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor), Adolphus Hailstork, Alfred Hollins, and George Walker. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. July 22 at 7. Admission by contribution.)

OUT OF TOWN

Caramoor—July 17 at 4:15: Pianist Ju-Ying Song performs Busoni's "Fantasia after J. S. Bach" and his transcription of Liszt's "Mephisto Waltz," as well as Debussy's "Images" (Book One) and Études (Book One) and Chopin's Polonaise-Fantaisie. . . . ¶ July 18 at 8: Wu Han offers piano works by Haydn (his E-Flat-Major Sonata, Hob. XVI/52), André Previn's "Variations on a Theme by Haydn," Debussy's "Children's Corner," and Chopin's First Ballade and "Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise Brillante." . . . ¶ July 19 at 8:30: A semi-staged performance of Rossini's "La Donna del Lago." . . . ¶ July 20 at 5:30: Flutist Eugenia Zukerman, pianist Brian Zeger, and actress Claire Bloom present works by Debussy (including his "Chansons de Bilitis"), Satie (his "Sports et Divertissements"), Mendelssohn, Messiaen, and others. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

Tanglewood—July 17 at 8 and July 19 at 2:30: Seiji Ozawa conducts the Tanglewood Music Center Vocal Fellows and Orchestra in a concert performance of Milhaud's ballet "L'Homme et Son Désir" and a staged production of Poulenc's Dadaist pro-procreation opera, "Les Mamelles de Tirésias." . . . ¶ July 18 at 8:30: Mr. Ozawa, the Boston Symphony, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and pianist Peter Serkin offer Mozart's C-Major Piano Concerto (K. 467), Takemitsu's "Asterism" and "My Way of Life" (with baritone Mark Oswald), and Beethoven's Choral Fantasy. . . . ¶ July 19 at 8:30: The Boston Symphony, conducted by James Conlon, performs Britten's "Ballad of Heroes" (with tenor John Aler and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus), Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1 (featuring Itzhak Perlman), and Stravinsky's "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . ¶ July 20 at 2:30: An all-Mozart program, comprising the Symphonies No. 31 and No. 36, the A-Major Piano Concerto (K. 488, featuring Ignat Solzhenitsyn), and two arias (with soprano Ying Huang). Mr. Conlon conducts the Boston Symphony. . . . ¶ July 22 at 8:30: Keith Lockhart leads the Boston Pops. (Lenox, Mass. 413-637-1600.)

Opera Festival of New Jersey—Final performances of the season. July 18 at 8 and July 20 at 2: Barber's "Vanessa." . . . ¶ July 19 at 8: "Faust." (Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, N.J. 609-279-1795.)

South Shore Summer Music Festival—Last month, Jon Nakamatsu became the tenth winner of the International Van Cliburn Piano Competition, thus garnering a full schedule of pre-booked concert engagements (among other prizes). In his first post-victory appearance in the tristate region, he offers works he

(Advt.)

What would you do with the power to change the past? Would you go back in time to eradicate civilization's greatest evils even though, by altering what has already occurred, you would be destroying the continuity of history? These are questions author **J.R. Dunn** addresses in his novel ***DAYS OF CAIN***—and the answers are anything but simple. Dunn posits a future where time-travel is possible and strictly controlled, and he sends a renegade with a conscience back to Auschwitz with plans to prevent the Nazi Holocaust. This is a novel that provokes thought and intense emotion because it does not shy away from the difficult issues of ethics and responsibility. You may find yourself questioning your own heart as well.

Christopher Moore takes an off-center look at cargo cults, messiahs, and mad doctors in his latest work, ***ISLAND OF THE SEQUINED LOVE NUN,*** a novel as comic and quirky as its title. Moore's story dumps an unwitting former pilot for a large cosmetics firm onto a Micronesian island hell ruled by a beautiful, bored sex goddess and populated by cannibals and crooked entrepreneurs. This book offers a decidedly twisted view of life in paradise—and it's a great indication why this author's personal cult of fans has been growing steadily with each new release.

Finally, it's back to the future with **Paul J. McAuley's *FAIRYLAND***—a tale of genetic engineering and its potentially terrifying ramifications. A brilliant little girl's dream of transforming an artificially created race of living "dolls" into a species capable of reproduction and free thought forms the spine of the story. The result is a novel rich in intelligence, imagination and moral ambiguity. McAuley shows us the dark possibilities of our tomorrow. And, in doing so, he tells us a lot about the world we live in today.

We'll talk again.

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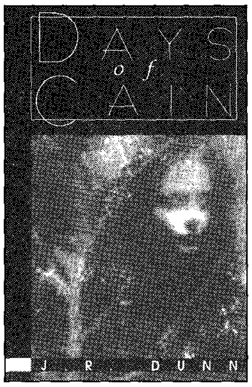

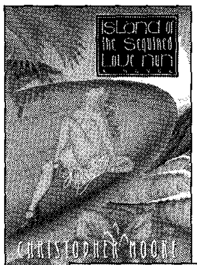

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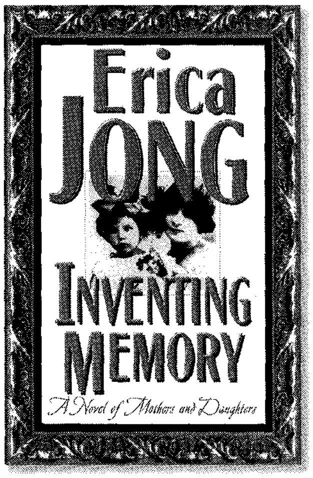

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performed in the competition: Franck's Prélude, Fugue, et Variation (originally for organ, here played in Harold Bauer's piano version), Brahms's C-Major Sonata (Op. 1), Chopin's "Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise Brillante," and Schumann's "Carnaval." (Norwalk Concert Hall, 125 East Ave., Norwalk, Conn. July 18 at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 203-227-0695.)

Glimmerglass Opera—July 19 at 8 and July 21 at 2: "L'Italiana in Algeri." . . . ¶ July 20 at 2: "Madama Butterfly." (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

Maverick Concerts—Quartets by Peter Schickele (his Third, subtitled "Four Seasons"), Dvořák (his "Cypresses"), and Schumann (in A Major, Op. 41, No. 3), played by the Audubon String Quartet. (Woodstock, N.Y. 914-679-8217. July 20 at 3.)

Music Mountain—The Brentano String Quartet performs Mozart's Quartet in E-Flat Major (K. 428), Mendelssohn's Quartet in E Minor (Op. 44, No. 2), and, with the assistance of Thomas Sauer, Schumann's Piano Quartet. (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. July 20 at 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Water, Water, Everywhere—On Saturday, July 19, seventeen swimmers—accountants, lawyers, and teachers among them—will circle the borough in the Manhattan Island Marathon Swim. Another thirty swimmers on relay teams will accompany them. This sixteenth annual race starts early (7 A.M.), to catch the incoming tide up the East River, and finishes twenty-eight and a half miles later (around 2 P.M.) off Battery Park. . . . ¶ Also on July 19, from 11 to 6, Battery Park is host to the third annual New York City Water Festival, an afternoon of food, games, and presentations by environmental groups. The Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, a hundred-and-six-foot-long replica of a nineteenth-century sailing vessel, will take interested parties on ninety-minute sails, at 12:30 and 2:30. For more information, call 888-692-7946. . . . ¶ And again on July 19, for those who want nothing more than to dip their toes in the water, the Friends of Gateway Recreation Area have arranged a ferry trip (offering spectacular views of New York Harbor) to the beaches of Sandy Hook, New Jersey, the pristine five-mile-long peninsula that juts into the Atlantic Ocean on the other side of Staten Island. The meeting place is Pier 11, at Wall and South Streets; departure is at 11 A.M. For reservations, which are required, call 352-9330.

Freedom Reigns—Bastille Day may be over, but Restaurant Florent still wants you to celebrate. Its annual party, on Gansevoort Street between Washington and Hudson Streets, starts July 20 at noon. The day ends, at 9, with a fashion show featuring interpretations of Marie Antoinette's wardrobe by such designers as Yves Saint Laurent, Isaac Mizrahi, and Oscar de la Renta.

Talk—July 17 at 2: Journalist Michael Kinsley moderates a debate on the power of organized labor, with writer William F. Buckley, Jr., economics professor Walter E. Williams, and others taking the side of management, and Public Advocate Mark Green, United Steel Workers Union president George Becker, and others arguing for the unions. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. No tickets necessary.)

Readings—July 16 at 6:15: Martin Amis reads from his forthcoming novel, "Night Train." (Benetton, Fifth Ave. at 48th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 17 at 8:30: Robert Olen Butler reads from his fiction and also gives a collaborative performance with singer-songwriter Bruce Cockburn. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 22 at 7:30: Erica Jong reads from her new novel, "Inventing Memory." (Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. No tickets necessary.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Too Hot for Words

THE first-ever heat wave occurred when Phaëthon drove the chariot of the sun too near the earth, reducing it to a kind of terrestrial biscuit. That description, from Ovid's "Metamorphoses," will seem familiar to anyone who has been in New York in the last few weeks. Public concern about the greenhouse effect has provoked many books in recent years. William J. Burroughs—the author of **Weather Cycles: Real or Imaginary?** (Cambridge)—is a skeptic on the subject. "Think of 'The Grapes of Wrath,'" he says. "The dust-bowl years in the States were still more extreme than anything we've had since in terms of hot weather." Fred Taylor, an expert on climatic change at Oxford University, recommends Steven Schneider's book **Global Warming** (Random House) as a popular guide: "The first part's fiction—he describes what the world will be like if global warming goes ahead. Then he backs off and talks about the preventive steps we could take."

Science-fiction writers love nothing better than imagining an apocalypse in which the world simply cooks. Take **The Day the Earth Caught Fire** (Ballantine), by Barry Wells, or **The Drought** (Viking), which marks only one instance of J. G. Ballard's unquenchable obsession with an uninhabitably hot world. Predictably, many of the writers fascinated by heat come from very hot countries. Enervating heat pulses through the works of Gabriel García Márquez; Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's portrayal of India is typified by the title of her novel **Heat and Dust** (Simon & Schuster).

Tempers fray easily in hot weather. Tropical heat whips the boys in William Golding's **Lord of the Flies** (Perigee) into a murderous frenzy. Sweat drips off every line of Carson McCullers's story of homicide in the Deep South, **Reflections in a Golden Eye** (Bantam). Meursault in Camus's **The Stranger** (Vintage) is driven to kill for no other reason than the heat of the Algerian noon.

If you're beginning to feel like this yourself, remember the sound advice of Daisy Buchanan in "The Great Gatsby": "Let's have fun. It's too hot to fuss."

EVER MEULEN

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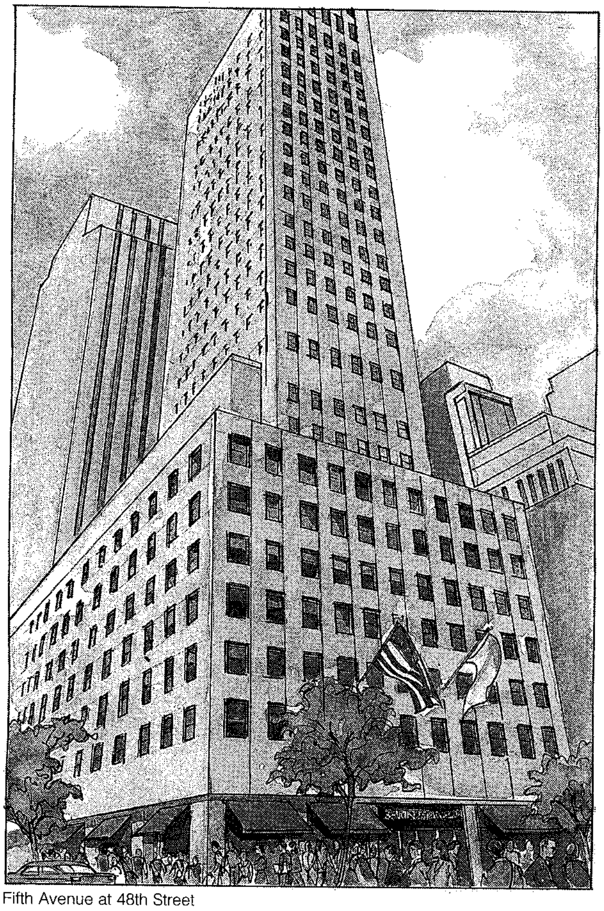
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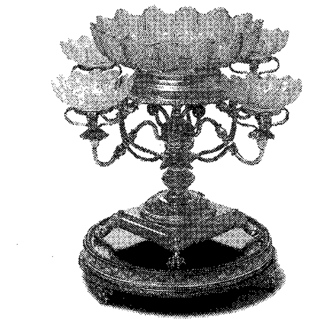

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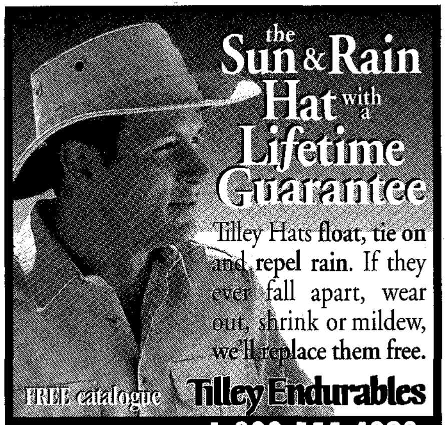

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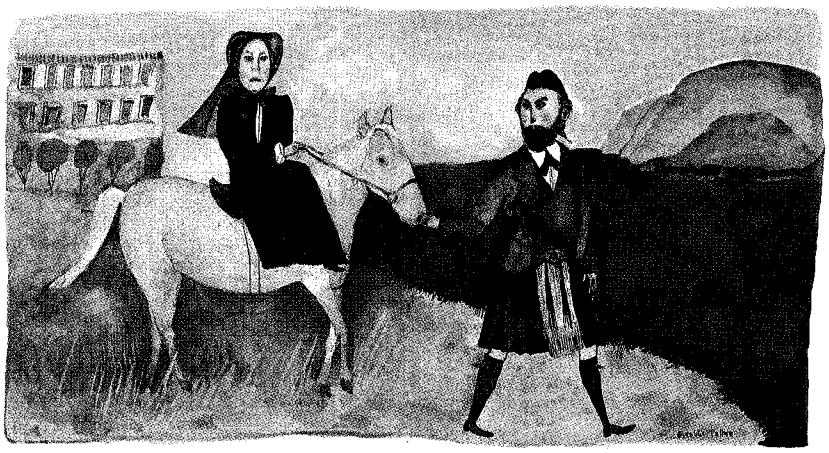
THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

CAFÉ SOCIETY—Writer-director Raymond De Felitta's true-life tale of the events leading to the 1952 arrest and subsequent conviction of the New York playboy Mickey Jelke on vice charges. With Peter Gallagher, Frank Whaley, and Lara Flynn Boyle. Opening July 18. (The Screening Room.)

GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE—The sixties animated hero comes to life in the person of Brendan Fraser, in an action-adventure comedy directed by Sam Weisman. Opening July 16. (86th Street East Twin, Embassy 4, and Gotham Cinema.)

KISS ME, GUIDO—Writer-director Tony Vitale's comedy about two actors, one straight and one gay, who become roommates. With Nick Scotti and Anthony Barrile. Opening July 18. (Lincoln Square and Village Theatre VII.)



Opening July 18, Judi Dench and Billy Connolly in "Mrs. Brown."

GISELLE POTTER

LATE BLOOMERS—Two women working at a Bible Belt high school fall in love, in a drama directed by Julia Dyer and written by her sister, Gretchen. Opening July 18. (Quad Cinema.)

MRS. BROWN—John Madden's film explores the love between the aging Queen Victoria (Judi Dench) and her servant John Brown (Billy Connolly). Opening July 18. (Angelika Film Center, Cinema I, and Lincoln Square.)

NOTHING TO LOSE—In writer-director Steve Oedekerk's comedy, an advertising executive (Tim Robbins) pulls a fast one on a carjacker (Martin Lawrence). Opening July 18. (Embassy 1.)

OPERATION CONDOR—An action-adventure movie starring Jackie Chan, who also co-wrote (with Edward Tang) and directed. Opening July 18. (84th Street Sixplex, Manhattan Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 22.)

ADDICTED TO LOVE—A desperately misbegotten screwball comedy. Matthew Broderick plays a dreamy astronomer who comes to New York to win back his girlfriend (Kelly Preston), who's moved in with a Frenchman (Tcheky Karyo); Meg Ryan plays the Frenchman's jilted fiancée, a tough New Yorker. Robert Gordon's creepy, contrived screenplay has Broderick and Ryan teaming up to stalk their exes, then falling in love with each other, but together the two stars plumb new lows in sexual chemistry. Directed by Griffin Dunne.—S.K. (First & 62nd Cinemas.)

AUSTIN POWERS: INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY—A parody of James Bond films and the swinging London of the sixties. The jokes are hit and miss, but Mike Myers, who plays dual roles (he's the super-sleuth photographer of the title, who's awakened from a cryogenic sleep he entered in 1967, and he's also Dr. Evil) and has upped the ante by writing his own script, delivers every line with a gentle, toothy, hilarious abandon. And Elizabeth Hurley, as the spy who helps Powers make the transition to the nineties, has a fine, dry way of setting up Myers's better jokes. The director is Jay Roach.—B.D. (Manhattan Twin and Village Theatre VII.)

BATMAN & ROBIN—It seems like a long time since Tim Burton brought Batman to the screen in such style; we are now at No. 4 in the series, and everything that Burton contributed has long since been left behind. What remains is a monstrosity of nothingness—you won't get your money back, but at least you could ask to have your brain returned in one piece. George Clooney plays Batman; you could imagine a twitchy soul like Michael Keaton requiring a dark alter ego, but Clooney is so smilingly sure of himself that it's hard to understand why he would want to go into his cellar and shoehorn his rear into black leather. Chris O'Donnell plays Robin, and Alicia Silverstone gets the new part of Batgirl, plus all the very worst lines. The villains are Poison Ivy (Uma Thurman), the diamond-powered Mr. Freeze (Arnold Schwarzenegger), and, most noisome of all, Joel Schumacher, who directed, or at any rate arranged various stunts to look something like a film. Warner Bros. should be ashamed of itself, but the movie is making a pile of money, and where's the shame in that?—A.L. (7/7/97) (Chelsea West, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

BRASSED OFF—Mark Herman's surprisingly enjoyable study of the effect of brass-band music on a depressed mining community in the North of England. Pete Postlethwaite stars as the bandleader, Danny. The miners' main reason to keep playing is the arrival of the bewitching Gloria (Tara Fitzgerald), who is actually working for the people who are planning to shut the pit down. The movie emerges, to Herman's great credit, not as stiff dialectic but as kindly, flexible farce. Also with Ewan McGregor.—A.L. (5/26/97) (Angelika Film Center, Beekman, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

BREAKDOWN—A well-made if not particularly original highway thriller, starring Kurt Russell as a man whose wife (Kathleen Quinlan) vanishes while they're vacationing in the Southwest. The director, Jonathan Mostow, milks a lot of anxiety out of dusty desert roads and creepy diners, building a fine suspense machine as Russell, in an impressive performance, tracks a menacing trucker (J. T. Walsh) who may be responsible for his wife's disappearance.—B.D. (Embassy 2; through July 17.)

Brilliant Lies—Anthony La Paglia, Gia Carides, and Zoe Carides star in a drama about a sexual-harassment complaint and its effects on a family. Directed by Richard Franklin, from a play by David Williamson. (Quad Cinema.)

Chasing Amy—In Kevin Smith's low-budget comedy, a young comic-book artist (Ben Affleck) falls in love with a pretty, vivacious blonde (Joey Lauren Adams), who is, inconveniently, a lesbian. Smith doesn't have the skill to maintain a pleasurable sense of anticipation for an entire movie; this picture, his third, is as crummy-looking and as sluggishly paced as his début feature, the 1994 "Clerks."—T.R. (4/7/97) (62nd & Broadway, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

Con Air—A bunch of America's most unreconstructed convicts, who are being flown to a new high-security jail, commandeer the plane and make a bid for freedom. The cast includes John Cusack as the good guy, John Malkovich as the bad guy, Nicolas Cage as the bad guy turned good, and Steve Buscemi as the bad guy turned extremely strange. The basic formula is now so exposed in its thinness and so blatant in its borrowings that the excitement soon grows horribly routine. Simon West directed.—A.L. (6/9/97) (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through July 17. . . . ¶ Embassy 2; starting July 18.)

Contact—Jodie Foster plays an astronomer who receives a message from outer space, in a movie based on Carl Sagan's 1985 novel. With Matthew McConaughey, John Hurt, James Woods, and Tom Skerritt. Directed by Robert Zemeckis. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Astor Plaza, Coronet Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Daytrippers—A Long Island schoolteacher (Hope Davis) suspects her husband (Stanley Tucci) of infidelity, and confesses her fears to her parents (Anne Meara and Pat McNamara), her sister (Parker Posey), and her sister's boyfriend (Liev Schreiber). The whole group then piles into the car and heads for Manhattan, hoping to pick up the elusive husband's scent. This low-budget début feature by the writer and director Greg Mottola is no big deal, but it has a terrific ensemble, and Mottola's affection for the characters is obvious.—T.R. (3/24/97) (Angelika 57 and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Donnie Brasco—The title character, played by Johnny Depp, is an undercover F.B.I. agent who infiltrates the Mafia by pretending to be a crooked jeweller—and also by pretending, even more successfully, to be incredibly dull. For some reason he is accepted into the Mob and befriended by Lefty (Al Pacino), a hoodlum on the wane. Pacino, as you would expect, gives a fine demonstration of sagging soulfulness, but it's hard to believe that people are still making movies that require us to feel sorry for mobsters. Paul Attanasio's script works hard to make fun of them, but Mike Newell's direction deadens any comedy in his quest for a violent mood piece.—A.L. (3/17/97) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

Dream with the Fishes—A black comedy written and directed by Finn Taylor, about an encounter between a suicidal young man (David Arquette) and a dying one (Brad Hunt). With Cathy Moriarty. (Angelika Film Center.)

The English Patient—Written and directed by Anthony Minghella, from the novel by Michael Ondaatje, this long and searching movie tangles together a number of stories and characters: Almásy (Ralph Fiennes) and Katharine (Kristin Scott Thomas), who have an affair in North Africa before the Second World War; a French-Canadian nurse (Juliette Binoche) who cares for the badly burned Almásy after the war, and the Sikh soldier (Naveen Andrews) *she* has an affair with; and the mysterious Caravaggio (Willem Dafoe), a scavenging thief who appears to know the secrets of Almásy's past. The triumph of the film lies not just in the force and range of the performances but in Minghella's creation of an intimate epic: vast landscapes mingle with the minute details of desire, and the combination is transfixing.—A.L. (11/25/96) (East 85th Street and Embassy 3.)

Face/Off—In John Woo's latest action extravaganza, the good guy (John Travolta) and the bad guy (Nicolas Cage) literally exchange faces and voices. The script, by Mike Werb and Michael Colleary, is a comic-book version of some of the director's pet themes, and, incredibly, Woo seems not to have recognized that this story can be treated only as a joke—as, at best, an absurdist, lightly self-mocking put-on. He chooses to render it instead as a parable of good and evil. And his inappropriate gravity has the effect of dulling his natural showmanship; his direction here is, atypically, labored and over-deliberate. Woo takes a full hour to plod through the exposition and complete the identity swap, and after that portentous buildup the high-concept gag doesn't pay off in laughs or thrills: it produces no more than a tiny, disappointing spark, like a damp firecracker. Also with Joan Allen, Alessandro Nivola, and Dominique Swain.—T.R. (7/14/97) (Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Waverly.)

4 Little Girls—A documentary by Spike Lee, about the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama. (Film Forum.)

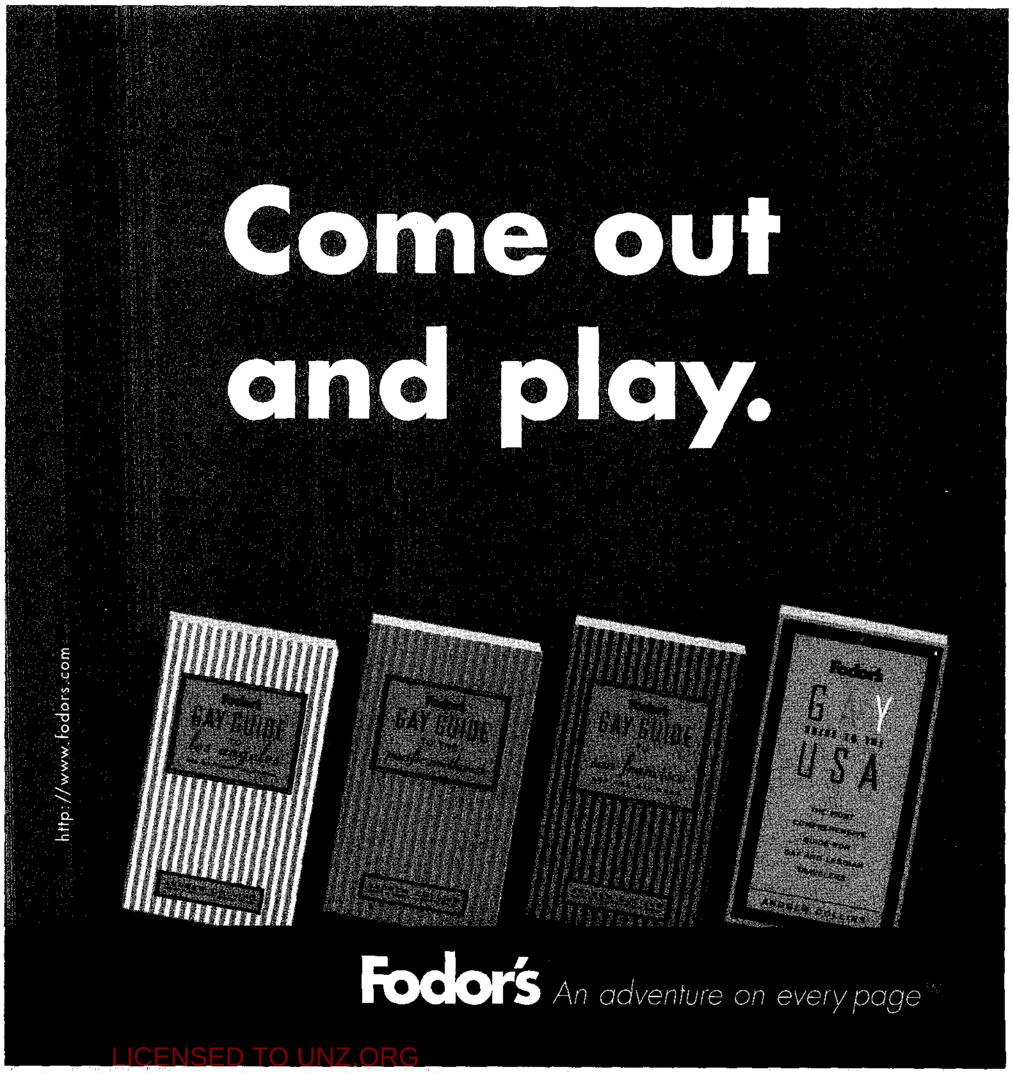
Gabbeh—Director Mohsen Makhmalbaf's latest drama, inspired by the intricate carpets of Iranian nomads. In Farsi. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Hercules—The new Disney animated adventure feels secondhand: the youthful hero is an obvious retread of Aladdin (all chin and forelock, but with weaker tunes), and the scary ambush sequence is set in exactly the same kind of valley that trapped Simba in "The Lion King." The only good news is the presence of James Woods as the voice of evil. ("The name is Hades, Lord of the Dead. Hi, how ya doing?") Otherwise, the picture is distinguished only in its Olympian moneygrubbing—an unblushing will to sell itself and its spinoff products.—A.L. (7/7/97) (86th Street East Twin, Guild, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, and Village East Cinemas. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through July 17.)

Kolya—A likable enough Czech reworking of a tried-and-true formula: a sort of "Kramer vs. Kramer" set in Prague, in 1988-89, at the dawn of the Velvet Revolution. The screenwriter, Zdenek Sverak, also plays the central character, a bachelor cellist who suddenly finds himself responsible for an adorable Russian five-year-old. The cellist slowly grows out of his selfishness, and his love for this child who doesn't speak his language points to the new, boundaryless world that's about to open up. Directed by Jan Sverak. In Czech.—S.K. (72nd Street East.)

Liar Liar—Tom Shadyac's movie stars Jim Carrey as a lying lawyer whose life is upended when his five-year-old son makes a birthday wish that, for exactly one day, his father will be incapable of telling a lie. As he peels away the layers of venal charm, you wait to discover an even more pungent venality beneath. Instead—guess what—he turns out to be a nice guy, and you feel let down when he finally surrenders to the forces of mush. But it's touching to find a director who believes in all sincerity that jokes about gas and pimples are, and always will be, inherently funny.—A.L. (3/31/97) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

The Lost World: Jurassic Park—Steven Spielberg's sequel to his 1993 blockbuster is, at its best, unmistakably the product of a master craftsman, and this time around he has found a way to amuse himself even as he cranks out a kind of movie that he has obviously outgrown. The director plays on our eagerness to be frightened by his mechanical beasts, and manipulates us so effortlessly that we begin to laugh at how



primitive our responses are. With Jeff Goldblum, Julianne Moore, and Pete Postlethwaite. Screenplay by David Koepp.—T.R. (6/2/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Ziegfeld.)

Love! Valour! Compassion!—Equal-opportunity mawkishness. Joe Mantello's film version of the 1994 Terrence McNally play—he also directed it Off Broadway—hangs on to the Neil Simonesque structure of a group of gay men spending three summer weekends together at a country house. The group includes Stephen Spinella, John Benjamin Hickey, John Glover, Jason Alexander (as a stereotypical Broadway-loving queen), and Randy Becker (as a Latin hunk).—S.K. (Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

Men in Black—Barry Sonnenfeld's science-fiction comedy (a nineties take on a sixties idea of what the future would be like) is indolent, confident, and shy of risks. Tommy Lee Jones (very cool) and Will Smith (speedy and high-spirited) play government agents who spend their days policing the activities of resident aliens; the plot requires them to track down an outsized bug that lodges inside the body of a farmer (Vincent D'Onofrio), who travels to New York in order to destroy the entire planet. The story is perilously thin, but maybe that's deliberate—Sonnenfeld is far more concerned with texture. Still, whenever the camera wanders away from Jones and Smith your attention goes with it (even Linda Fiorentino, as a horny medical examiner, feels irrelevant to the action), and you may find yourself unable to remember anything about the movie the day after you see it.—A.L. (7/7/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

My Best Friend's Wedding—In P. J. Hogan's romantic comedy, a writer (Julia Roberts) learns that her former lover and current best friend (Dermot Mulroney) is engaged to be married; she suddenly realizes that she's in love with him and resolves to sabotage the nuptials by any means necessary. For the first hour or so, Roberts's enthusiastic, sexy clowning energizes the picture, but then the filmmakers spoil our enjoyment: they allow dull good sense to triumph over their star's outsized appeal. Also with Cameron Diaz and Rupert Everett.—T.R. (6/16/97) (Criterion Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

Night Falls on Manhattan—Yet another movie about New York City police corruption by Sidney Lumet. This one, starring Andy Garcia as a Manhattan D.A. prosecuting a drug king accused of shooting some cops, really belongs in a TV lineup. Lumet began his career, in the fifties, as a director of hard-hitting teleplays, and after years of Hollywood moviemaking he appears to have come full circle.—B.D. (Manhattan Twin.)

Out to Sea—A comedy by Martha Coolidge, about two dance hosts (Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau) on a cruise to the Caribbean. (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea West, Cinema II, Lincoln Square, National Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and 34th St. East.)

The Pillow Book—A drama written and directed by Peter Greenaway, centering on a woman obsessed with having calligraphic messages inscribed on her body. With Vivian Wu, Yoshi Oida, and Ewan McGregor. In Japanese and English. (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 68th St. Playhouse.)

Ponette—Writer-director Jacques Doillon's story of a four-year-old (Victoire Thivisol) who must come to terms with the sudden death of her mother. In French. (59th Street East Cinema.)

La Promesse—Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's powerful coming-of-age story stars Jérémie Rénier as Igor, a streetwise Belgian teen-ager who helps his scummy father (Olivier Gourmet) traffic in illegal immigrants. When Igor sees one of his father's hapless African victims fall off a ladder, he promises to protect the dying man's wife and child; his struggle to uphold his pledge turns into a morality tale permeated with a Dickensian indignation at evil. A risk-taking, original piece of work. In French.—S.K. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Scream—An entertaining horror comedy in which the director Wes Craven and his scriptwriter, Kevin Williamson, take the clichés of fright films and reinvigorate them with a cheeky knowingness: the victims are horror-movie aficionados who in many instances make the same mistakes they've joked about seeing made on screen. With help from an unusually strong cast—Drew Barrymore, Neve Campbell, Courteney Cox, and David Arquette all do smashing work—Craven wrings some real thrills from the familiar perils of all those teen-age gorefests.—B.D. (Worldwide Cinemas.)

Shall We Dance?—A former professional dancer takes a middle-aged businessman as a student and rediscovers the pleasures of her art, in a film directed by Masayuki Suo. In Japanese. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Shooting Porn—A documentary about the gay blue-movie industry in Hollywood, written and directed by Ronnie Larsen. (Cinema Village.)

A Simple Wish—Michael Ritchie's fantasy comedy pits a good, if bumbling, fairy (Martin Short) and his young charge (Mara Wilson) against two evil fairies (Kathleen Turner and Amanda Plummer). (Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, National Twin, and Park & 86th Street Cinemas.)

Speed 2: Cruise Control—Just when she thought it was safe to go on the water, Sandra Bullock, who enjoyed such a swell ride in the first "Speed," winds up sharing a luxury cruise ship with a boring boyfriend (Jason Patric) and an ailing nut case (Willem Dafoe), who plants smoke bombs all over the place, screws up the computer systems, and tries to crunch the vessel into the side of an oil tanker. The trouble is that none of this is exactly hasty; even at full speed, the ship goes about as fast as a retired dolphin, and the director, Jan De Bont, is forced to stretch out the climax to the point where you're actually bored by so much disaster. The whole business, in fact, is amazingly slack compared to the original, and even to De Bont's last movie, "Twister." As for Patric, you keep wondering why a male model is doing all this heroic stuff with bombs and harpoon guns when he should be displaying a new swimwear line.—A.L. (7/7/97) (Criterion Center and First & 62nd Cinemas.)

Temptress Moon—Chen Kaige's gorgeous, insanely portentous allegory of Chinese decadence follows three characters through the first half of this century: an opium-addicted heiress (Gong Li); her brother-in-law (Leslie Cheung), who wanted to be a scholar but has wound up a gigolo and a con man; and a distant cousin (Kevin Lin), who becomes her servant and then patiently, cunningly works his way into power. Once in a while Chen achieves the visual intensity of a great silent film, in stylized shots of a fog-covered garden or in closeups of his haughty, passionate stars. Otherwise, it's a festival of kitsch. In Mandarin.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

This World, Then the Fireworks—A film noir based on Jim Thompson's 1955 short story about corrupt siblings (Billy Zane and Gina Gershon) setting up a new con. Directed by Michael Oblowitz. (Carnegie Hall Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Ulee's Gold—In Ulee Jackson, a widowed beekeeper living in the Florida panhandle, Peter Fonda has a role that makes virtues of his expressive limitations. The movie, written and directed by Victor Nunez, is designed to draw this lonely, quietly embittered man out of his emotional hibernation, and for once Fonda's very deliberate style feels appropriate: there's pain in it, and fear, and an awful kind of resignation. Also with Patricia Richardson.—T.R. (6/16/97) (Angelika Film Center and Regency.)

Underground—While there are many reasons to feel annoyed with Emir Kusturica's 1995 farce epic—its three-hour running time, its tuba-laden score, its frenetically overcrowded scenario of political allegories—this is still the richest, most delirious filmmaking in recent memory. The story covers fifty years of deception between two Yugoslav friends, Blacky and Marko, beginning in the Second World War, when Blacky and other anti-Nazi partisans bunker down in a secret underground cave manufacturing arms while Marko grows rich on the profits. After the war Marko keeps them in hiding by piping in recorded battle sounds and old news reports; he convinces them that the Nazis are still in power through Tito's regime and the subsequent nightmare of the civil war. The film is rude and disorganized, a black carnival of ghastly humor and brilliant imagery, the frame packed with an enormous amount of metaphorical information and Fellini-on-mescaline incongruities. As a visual fantasist, Kusturica rivals Terry Gilliam in sheer exuberance; he's a master of the go-for-broke shot. The picture takes time to get going, but when it does it's absolutely thrilling and unforgettable. In Serbo-Croatian.—B.D. (Anthology Film Archives.)

When the Cat's Away—An improvisational comedy, directed by Cédric Klapisch, about the search for a cat in Paris. In French. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Wild America—Scott Bairstow, Devon Sawa, and Jonathan Taylor Thomas play brothers who travel across the country in 1967 with a 16-mm. camera—characters based on the wildlife documentarians Marty, Mark (who is one of the producers), and Marshall Stouffer. William Dear directed. (Chelsea Cinemas and Criterion Center.)

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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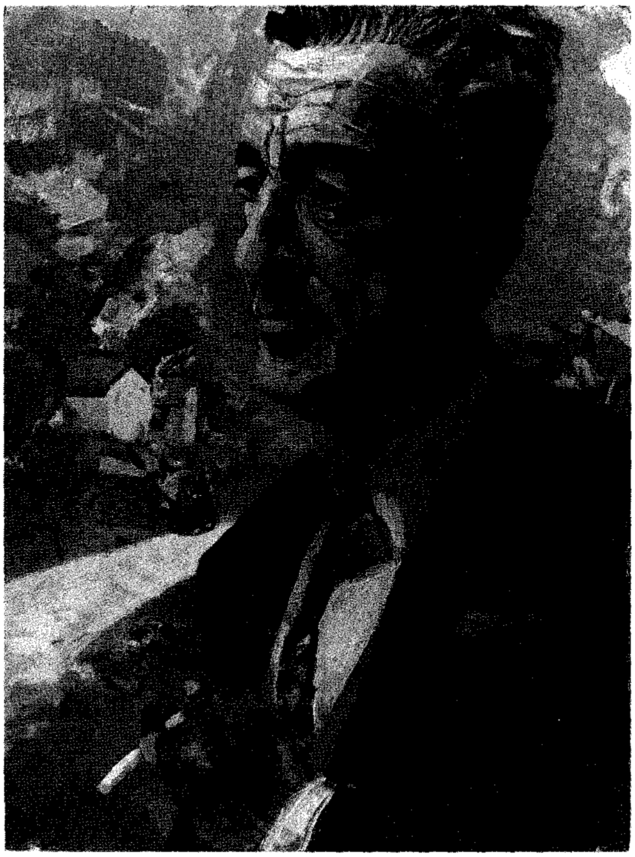
(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St.
Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy 1, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Manhattan Twin, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
68th St. Playhouse, Third Ave. at 68th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

General della Rovere (1959)—Vittorio De Sica has perhaps his greatest role in this otherwise mediocre film, directed by Roberto Rossellini. It is set in Genoa in 1943. De Sica is a small-time swindler with a classic con man's grand manner; the Germans induce him to impersonate a Resistance general whom they have inadvertently shot, and send him to a political prison, where he is supposed to ferret out information for them. But the petty, self-loathing crook, experiencing for the first time the respect and admiration—even the awe—of other men, becomes as courageous as the fighter he impersonates. De Sica is superb; we watch his evolution from worm to Il Generale with utter astonishment and delight. But this film, made on a slender budget and shot and edited in six weeks, is—surprisingly—too long; the director doesn't seem to have discovered his best material until it was too late to pull the story together. In Italian.—P.K. (Anthology Film Archives; July 21-22.)



At Anthology Film Archives, films directed by, or starring, Vittorio De Sica.

RICCARDO VECCHIO

My Name Is Julia Ross (1945)—Three weeks behind on the rent for her London apartment, a lonely gal (Nina Foch) signs on as the live-in secretary of a wealthy matron (Dame May Whitty). Within hours, her employer drugs her and whisks her away to a seaside estate in Cornwall, where she's dressed and addressed as the wife of the dowager's knife-wielding son (George Macready). This brisk, compact, and gratifying suspense film takes the plight of a woman alone to immediate extremes and stays unsettling right up to the end (which comes only an hour later). Joseph H. Lewis's direction is a model of B-movie craft. He charges the hokum with emotion—at one point, he focusses an entire scene on Foch's frightened eyes as Macready's threatening shoulders block most of her face.—M.S. (Film Forum 2; July 17.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2 and 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**Theatre 2:** July 16: "Cat People" (1942, Jacques Tourneur) and "I Walked with a Zombie" (1943, Tourneur). . . . July 17: "The Dark Past" (1949, Rudolph Maté) and "My Name Is Julia Ross" (†). . . . July 18-19: "Border Incident" (1949, Anthony Mann) and "Mystery Street" (1950, John Sturges). . . . July 20: "Pushover" (1954, Richard Quine) and "Private Hell 36" (1954, Don Siegel). . . . July 21: "The Poor Little Rich Girl" (1917, Maurice Tourneur; silent) and "Daddy Long Legs" (1919, Marshall Neilsan; silent), both with Mary Pickford. . . . July 22: "Teenage Gang Debs" (1966, S. N. Johnsen) and "Girl Gang" (1954, Robert C. Derteno). . . . **Theatre 3:** "Contempt" (1963, Jean-Luc Godard; in French).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—July 17 at 2:30: "Midnight Mary" (1933, William Wellman). . . . ¶ July 17 at 6 and July 19 at 2: "The Women" (1939, George Cukor). . . . ¶ July 18 at 2:30: "Good News" (1930, Nick Grinde and Edward J. MacGregor). . . . ¶ July 18 at 6: "Min and Bill" (1930, George W. Hill). . . . ¶ July 18 at 8: "Camille" (1937, Cukor). . . . ¶ July 19 at 5: "Riffraff" (1935, J. Walter Ruben). . . . ¶ July 20 at 2: "The Girl from Missouri" (1934, Jack Conway). . . . ¶ July 20 at 5: "Red-Headed Woman" (1932, Conway). . . . ¶ A program of films written (alone or with others) by their directors. July 21 at 2:30: "Lone Star" (1996, John Sayles). . . . July 21 at 6: "Fargo" (1996, Joel Coen). . . . July 22 at 2:30: "Breathless" (1959, Jean-Luc Godard; in French). . . . July 22 at 6: "Through a Glass Darkly" (1961, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish). . . . ¶ July 22 at 2: "Sherlock, Jr." (1924, Buster Keaton; silent).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—July 16-17: Films by Jean-Luc Godard; in French, with English subtitles. . . . ¶ From July 18: The Sixth New York Video Festival.

Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing, beginning with Looney Tunes and coming attractions. The feature on July 21 will be "To Kill a Mockingbird" (1962, Robert Mulligan). (Rain date is the following night.)

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—July 19 at 2: "Blade Runner" (1982, Ridley Scott). . . . July 19 at 4:30: "The Element of Crime" (1984, Lars Von Trier). . . . July 20 at 2: "Body Heat" (1981, Lawrence Kasdan). . . . July 20 at 4:30: "Manhunter" (1986, Michael Mann).

The 20th Asian American International Film Festival—Two weekends (July 18-20 and July 25-27) of new films from Hong Kong, the United States, Australia, Brazil, India, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, China, South Korea, Iran, and Thailand. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. For information, call 925-6014.)

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—Films directed by, or starring, Vittorio De Sica; in Italian, with English subtitles. July 18-20 at 8: "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" (1964) and "Marriage—Italian Style" (1964). . . . July 21-22 at 8: "Two Women" (1960) and "General della Rovere" (†).

MADONNA AND CHILD, 2008
Mom, you're kind of, like, EMBARRASSING me.

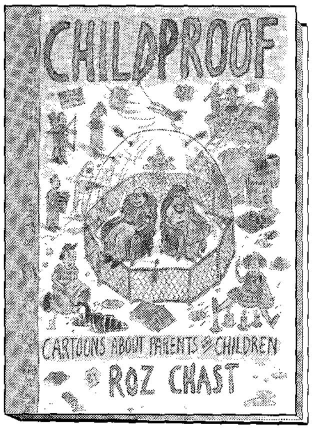
CHILDPROOF

CARTOONS ABOUT PARENTS & CHILDREN

BY

ROZ CHAST

In her long-awaited new collection, *New Yorker* cartoonist Roz Chast takes on the joys, trials, and jaw-dropping mysteries of being a parent. *Childproof* is a hilarious addition to every parent's arsenal of survival strategies for the Wonder Years.



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AT BOOKSTORES FROM HYPERION

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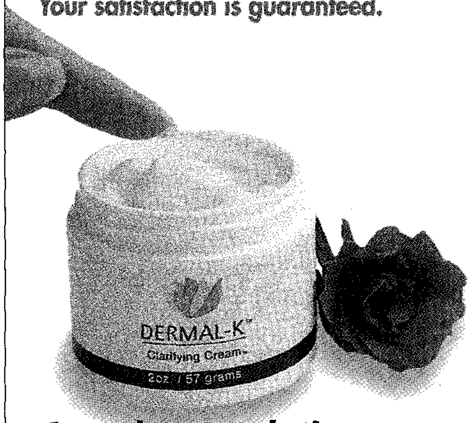

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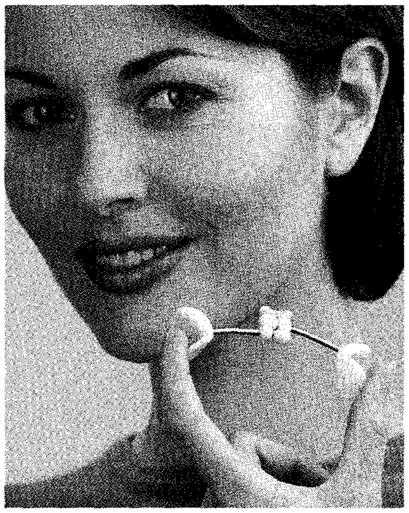

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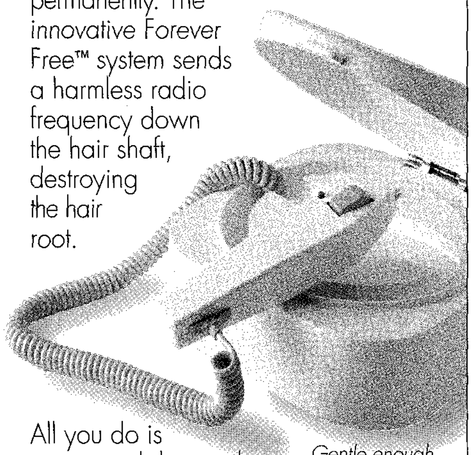

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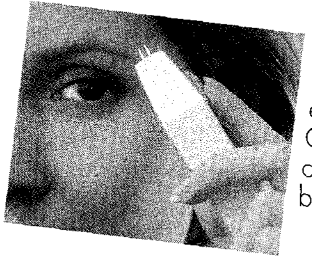

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE SPORTING SCENE

In the Bronx, "Irabu" spells bliss in any language.

NO one got bitten. Stately, plump Hideki Irabu, feet together on the mound, chewing gum clamped down, mind-set unknown, heaved a sigh, leaned and bowed, cricked his left leg, and threw a called strike to the Tigers' first-inning leadoff man, Brian Hunter, ending a sports prehype possibly unmatched since last month's heavyweight debacle in Las Vegas, and beginning a pleasurable evening's work that matched all expectation. "I wouldn't sell this night for anything," the newest and strangest Yankee celebrity declared (through an interpreter) after the game ended—a financial evaluation not to be taken lightly, coming as it did from a rookie who had signed on for $12.8 million (for four years), and who had enjoyed a full-scale City Hall photo op with Mayor Giuliani before ever throwing (or witnessing) a single pitch to a major-league batter. Before long, he had thrown ninety-eight of them, sixty-one for strikes (good for nine strikeouts in six and two-thirds innings), and was allowed to take his seat, pelted by happy sounds issuing from 51,901—no, 103,802—tonsils, minus surgery, with the Yankees ahead, 10–2 (it was 10–3 in the end), in an interhemispherical laugher. Just possibly, baseball's new era had begun.

After the Yanks helpfully batted around in two successive innings, peeling away all tension, the players and the ecstatic Stadium multitudes were free to give full attention to the other event of the evening, which was international communication. Around the Stadium, fans had been putting down rows of "K"s—a scorecard "K" for each Irabu whiff—on the Stadium facings, but with Japanese variations: a pair of ideograms for "strikeout" in Japanese, a terser "K," in the katakana phonetic alphabet, behind the loge level in short left. On the opposite, Yankee side, John DeSomma and Steve Palladino, a couple of fans from New Jersey, were hanging up cards marked 伊, one by one, under the impression that they meant "strikeout"—they'd cribbed from a headline in the Bergen *Record* that morning—but they were politely tipped off by some nearby Japanese-born rooters that it was the "I" from "Irabu." "Whatever," opined a gent in the next row. "It's the thought that counts."

Up in the press box, I was struck dumb by an exotic forestry of Japanese appearing on the word-processor screen of a neighbor scribe, Mr. Yoshinori Nakai, of the Mainichi newspaper chain, and in a pause he told me that the Irabu story wasn't going to be easy for his readers back home to swallow, since the twenty-eight-year-old pitcher had turned his back on his old team, the Chibe Lotte Marines, while stubbornly (or prudently) insisting on signing only with the Yankees. "This is a story for the younger generation," he said. "Others have . . ." He paused.

"Mixed feelings?" I suggested.

"Ah, yes, 'mixed feelings'! Thank you."

In the Yankee clubhouse later, Derek Jeter, the dashing shortstop, was talking to three female Japanese reporters. "Hideki had a lot of composure out there," he said.

" 'Compo-sure,' " said one of the young women carefully.

"You got it," Jeter said, and the women laughed, bending over with happiness.

When the Yankees came off the field after the postgame handshakings and fist-bumpings, Manager Joe Torre cut in front of Irabu, and, with careful mime, tipped his cap toward the fans. Irabu, a quick study, caught on and tipped his—and won a last, full-throated roar of appreciation. —ROGER ANGELL

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

THE PICTURES

Star treatment for "Men in Black" 's six-legged extras.

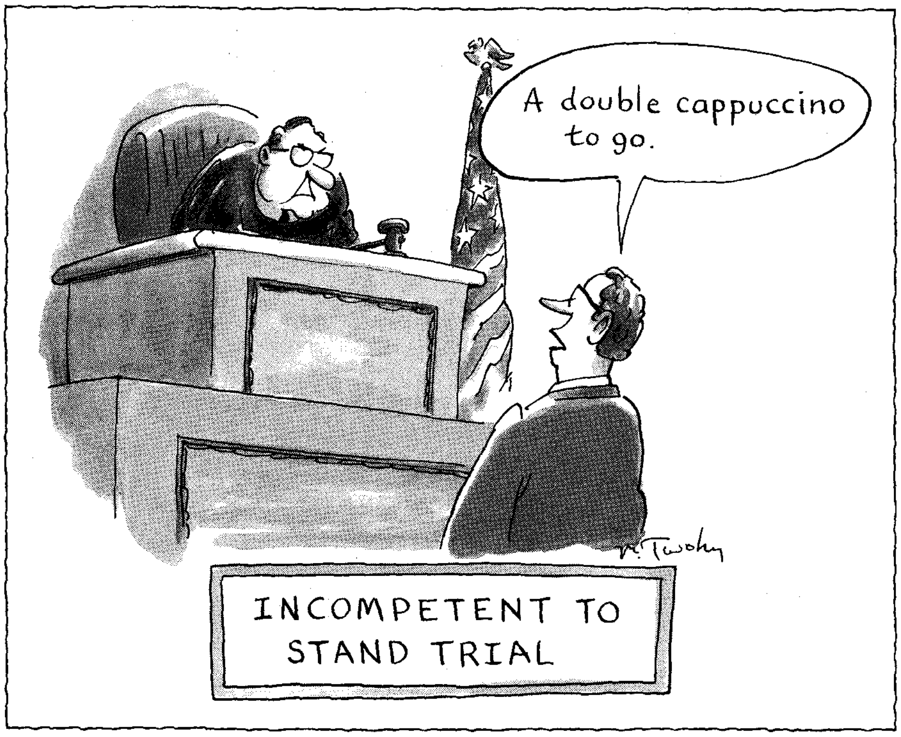
THE villain in the movie "Men in Black" is a giant cockroach from another galaxy. The film, consistent with movies dating back to "Them" (1954), takes a fairly traditional approach to insect villainy. "Bugs thrive on carnage," "Men in Black" 's Agent K (Tommy Lee Jones) says in one scene. "They consume, infest, and destroy. They live off the death and decay of other species." Though the film may demonize roaches, the director, Barry Sonnenfeld, wants to make it clear that he and his crew went to great pains to show respect for the living roaches on the set. "We always had to have people there from the American Humane Association," Sonnenfeld said recently from a poolside phone at the Hotel Bel Air. "In each shot we had to tell them how many roaches we were using. So if we had eighty roaches coming out of a Dumpster they would actually count—'We're still missing three, guys'—and we'd be shooting at ten thousand dollars an hour, looking for three roaches."

Needless to say, when Agent J (Will Smith) crushes a number of roaches underfoot late in the movie, those are stunt doubles. "Mustard packs," Sonnenfeld said. "You're allowed to step on mustard packs because at the moment there's no mustard-defamation league. We also had hundreds

of little rubber roaches, which you're also allowed to step on. But you'd never, ever step on a real roach. If Will accidentally did step on one, we'd all go, 'Oh man, I'm sorry.' The bug wranglers would say, 'Well, just make sure you don't do it again.'

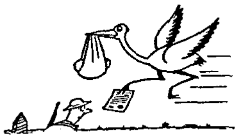
"The Humane Association's attitude is that it can't draw the line anywhere," the director continued. "If it says, 'Well, we're not worried about roaches,' then someone else will say, 'You let those guys kill those roaches, why can't we kill rats?' And the next thing you know, they're killing dogs and horses and stuff."

There's one thing still puzzling Sonnenfeld. "What's weird," he said, "is that in case any roaches did get lost, at the end of the shooting day we were allowed to fumigate the stage." —David Shenk



POSTPARTUM DEPT.

A different kind of mommy track in Central Park.



On the Upper East Side, a couple of dozen mostly new moms, still young enough to be addicted to their teenisms, take their babies in strollers and gather in Central Park for a fifty-minute exercise class called Strollercize. The babies are, like, you know, four weeks old, ten weeks old, one year, whatever. Some of them are still wearing the pink or blue hats they got in the hospital. Others wear Baby Gap porkpies or too cutesy oversized baseball caps on sidewise, and one has on a seventy-dollar Tartine et Chocolat handmade job. Most of the moms had entered the competitive workplace, stayed awhile, and then took maternity leave of it. Today, in class, their purpose is to shape up, lose poundage, bolster leg muscles, tone skin, appear interested in having sex again. The moms, looking somewhat underjoyous, have loaded their babies up on milk and are counting on them to keep quiet until the end of class.

While waiting to start their workout, the moms are eager to talk to anybody who seems to listen. They were marketplace competitive, but now they focus their competitive skills on one another. They compare their pregnancies. ("I had incontinence you wouldn't believe.") They compare who had an easy delivery; who pushed more; who had an epidural; who got ignored or treated rudely while in the hospital corridor awaiting delivery; whose obstetrician cared; who got only what she needed as presents; who got prestigious presents; who got lucky with a nanny; who has the Peg Perego stroller ("It's the sturdiest"); who has the Emmaljunga stroller ("It's the most indestructible and carries a week's supply of groceries underneath").

A baby cries. Its mom talks to it in unctuous mommy singsong: "Oh, yes, it's so-o-o *rough* being a baby, isn't it? Poor little baby, I know it's so-o-o *rough* being a baby."

The baby, not satisfied, screams. The mom plops a pacifier in its mouth.

The moms are lining up, looking to the leadership of Elizabeth Trindade, the Strollercize originator, a dark-haired woman, hard-muscled, super-confident. A no-nonsense drill sergeant.

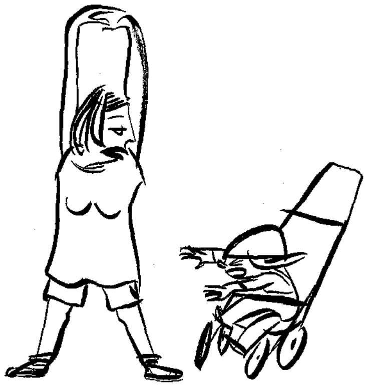
"Warmups," Elizabeth barks. "Arm up and overhead. Other arm up, up, and over." She shows how. She is a mom of three. She has lost fourteen pounds since her now two-month-old was born. ("I started right away, and I mean immediately, pulling in the gut, right in the hospital.") One of Elizabeth's instructors is Mariah Seminara, a leggy blond ex-Californian, wearing a cap with her ponytail hanging out of the hole behind. She wears—"as a kick," she says—a Western Samoan T-shirt that says "*Suasusu o le Tina: :Pui puia le Pepe mai le manava Tata*"—which basically means "Breast-feed your baby." She's newly married and childless. Unlike the moms, she is noticeably high-spirited and carefree. The moms watch her with admiration.

The moms do warmups. March in place! Legs up! They still talk while moving. One-upmanship is in the air.

"I never give my baby a pacifier."

"This pacifier is different—it's a teething ring, with fingers. It smells like vanilla. They *love* it."

Some moms are bloated. Elizabeth and Mariah regard them sympathetically but without tolerance for their bulges. Jog in place. Kick your rear. Kick your butt. Belly button in. Hands up. Get that heart rate up. Stomach in. Carrying the baby made you bend over. Straighten up. Up!



The moms run, pushing the strollers. They still talk. But now they're telling one another how good they were in their jobs, how much their bosses needed them, before the baby. They were cable-television producers, lawyers, financial analysts, violinists. They tell how their jobs were special. Only a kindergarten teacher feels otherwise; she says she definitely will *not* be a kindergarten teacher anymore. Get those knees up. Get those toes up. Legs. Kick! Jumping Jills. (No, not Jumping *Jacks.*) Straight legs. Tie the shoes. Tantrum. Tantrum. Straighten up. Butts in. Butts in. *In!*

End of class. The moms, each holding a stroller by the handle, sit down on a wooden rail along the Park road.

A ten-week-old baby cries. He has a sort of Harrison Ford face. His mom, one of the lawyers, picks him up, pulls out a businesslike breast, firmly sticks the baby's face on it, and says, "I'm getting, like, more and more O.K. about going back to work." —LILLIAN ROSS

DEPT. OF HEALTH

A physician's-eye view of the Tyson-Holyfield incident.

A HUMAN being will bite a fellow-member of the species under many different circumstances. Stand in an elevator and take in your croissant-carrying fellow-traveller and know that under that sober exterior lies a passionate animal who has almost certainly, at one time or another, bitten or been the bitee. Of course, the majority of these bites—hickeys—draw no blood and attract no medical attention. And most bites don't result in a three-million-dollar fine and the loss of one's boxing license.

Whenever skin is broken, however, a bite moves into a special niche in medical folklore. Academic careers have been built on studying the microbiology of bites. Dog bites are practically clean, with infection occurring in only about fifteen per cent of cases; monkey bites are more serious; but the human bite is very likely to produce dangerous infection if not treated with antibiotics.

Between ten and twenty per cent of the human bites that I see as an infectious-diseases specialist are on the face, neck, breast, or genital area and occur during sexual activity. When Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes first kissed, she wrote in her journal, she bit his cheek so hard that she drew blood. There's no word on whether Hughes was put on penicillin. The sports commentator Marv Albert was recently accused of engaging in this type of biting by a woman who has now pressed assault charges, a reminder that the consequences of too deep a nip are not just medical but possibly legal. Some experts believe that these more serious coital bites may be the result of involuntary jaw spasm that occurs at the moment of orgasm. Whether such a lockjaw defense could stand up in court is debatable.

Another type of bite is the occlusional bite, typically incurred when a finger—or an ear—inadvertently finds itself between the opponent's incisors. In that setting, the temptation to chomp down is irresistible. According to news reports, Sam Donaldson once bit a White House secretary's hand in this fashion. (He denies the story.)

The most severe human bite, and the most common, is the C.F.I., or closed-fist injury, seen in barroom brawls. The biggest myth Hollywood has ever perpetrated is that such brawling is innocuous, manly sport. But let's say you did get into a fistfight and came away with a small wound on the knuckle: the skin break might seem trivial, not even requiring a Band-Aid, but at the moment of impact your opponent's bacteria-bearing tooth may have penetrated the joint capsule and bone. The odds are high that you will seek no medical advice, and will spend twenty-four hours revelling in your victory, after which you will wake up to severe pain, fever, and dramatic swelling of your hand and forearm. In the emergency room, you will be surprised to hear that you will get intravenous antibiotics for a week or more, and that you will almost certainly require surgery. If you delay and, instead, try the ice-pack-and-painkiller routine, you may end up needing life-saving limb amputation.

It is dismaying to learn that the human mouth is such a cesspool. We brush and floss and use a rinse that kills germs on contact, and yet every millilitre of our saliva harbors about a hundred million organisms of approximately forty-two species. From a microbiologist's point of view, then, a bite is infinitely worse than a bark. —ABRAHAM VERGHESE

INK

Is it possible that when HarperCollins cancelled more than a hundred books recently, for the most part because the authors had missed their deadlines, the publisher started an international trend? Note the following correspondence between a British editor and author.

10 June 1997

DEAR BLAKE MORRISON,

I have been urged to do some reminding about old, unfulfilled contracts, and of course your book on plagiarism—due to have been delivered eleven years ago—is regarded as a prime offender.

Is there any chance at all that we could agree to a date when it, or some mutation of it, could be with us? Or should I write to [your agent] and ask for that first part of the advance to be returned? I'd much rather it was the former, of course. Would you care to ring me to discuss the matter?

With good wishes all round.

Yours,
CHRIS REID
Faber & Faber Limited, publishers

16 June 1997

DEAR CHRIS,

Thank you for your letter. I was, I confess, a little taken aback by its harassing tone. Only eleven years past my delivery date and already you are putting pressure on me! I have always looked up to Faber & Faber as a publisher which understands the creative temperament—which appreciates how a writer, through no fault of his own, can sometimes fall a little behind schedule. Goodness knows, it's not as if a seminal work can be tossed off overnight.

In fact, until your letter arrived, I had been making steady progress with the plagiarism book, at a pace of two to three pages annually. In one year, my annus mirabilis, the figure actually rose to five pages, and I had firm hopes of having the first draft of the typescript with you by the end of the next century (or certainly millennium). But now I find your letter has thrown me, that I'm quite unable to work and have become horribly blocked.

Why is everyone so impatient these days to see "results"? In my youth, a writer could take time (indeed a lifetime) over a work to get it right. But it seems those days are coming to an abrupt end, and that those of us who fix our sights on posthumous publication are no longer in favor.

In the circumstances, I have little alternative but to consider cancelling the contract and returning the advance. But—let's not be hasty—you could always take me out for that lunch you promised first.

Best wishes,
BLAKE

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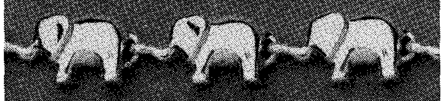

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ANNALS OF LAW

CLINTON'S LEFT-HAND MAN

One man's struggle in the Justice Department with the President's not so secret conservatism.

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

ON January 15, 1993, five days before Bill Clinton's Inauguration as President, Walter Dellinger was working at his desk, at the Duke University Law School, when he received an urgent summons to Washington. "It was a rainy Friday, and this guy I'd never met named Bernie Nussbaum called and said he was the counsel to the President-elect," Dellinger recalled not long ago. "He said he'd just come from meeting with Clinton. He told me that the following Friday—Clinton's second day in office—was the twentieth anniversary of Roe v. Wade. He said Clinton wanted to issue a series of executive orders on that day to undo a lot of what Reagan and Bush had done on abortion. They wanted to do a whole series of things—end the 'gag rule,' which said that federally funded clinics couldn't advise women of their right to seek abortions, permit abortions on overseas military bases, allow fetal-tissue research again. They wanted me to draft the orders.

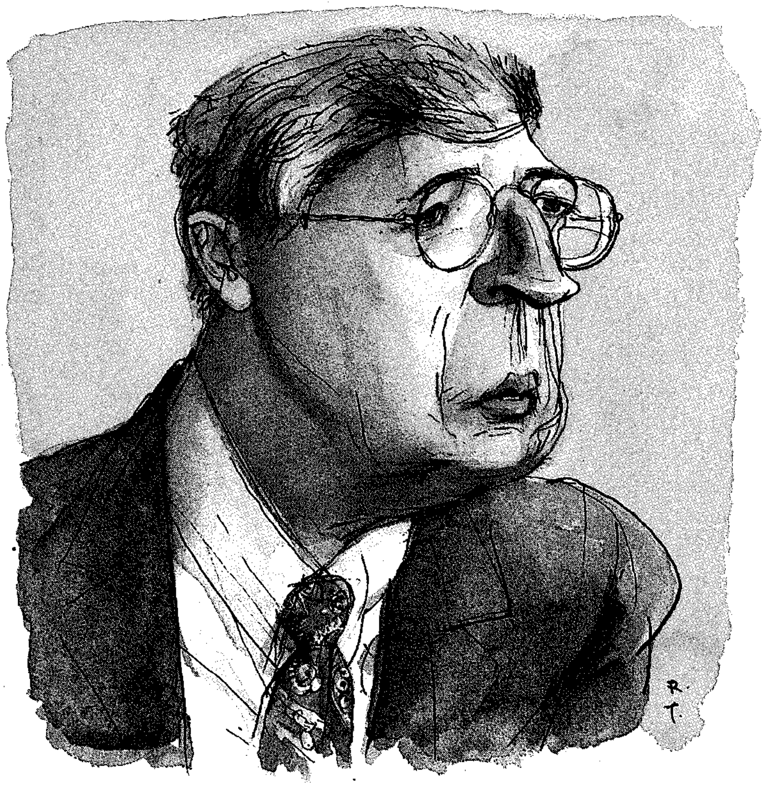
"I told Bernie I didn't think it could be done," Dellinger went on. "Executive orders usually take months to get through the process. But Bernie brushed it off. He said, 'They tell us you can do these things.' I had two Supreme Court briefs I was working on, but I wasn't about to turn down this opportunity, so the next day my wife and I got in the car and headed to Washington."

Nussbaum's confidence in Dellinger was understandable. At the time, Dellinger was one of a handful of top liberal legal academics in the nation. He had been a professor at Duke since 1969, and was known as an outspoken advocate of abortion rights and religious tolerance, and an adviser to Democratic senators in the epochal Supreme Court confirmation battle over Robert Bork. During the previous twelve years, Republicans, under the leadership of Edwin Meese III and other conservative activists, and through the appointment of justices and other judges, had accomplished a near-revolution in American law. Dellinger was an obvious choice to help return civil liberties and civil rights to a preëminent place on the national agenda.

"We didn't even have office space," Dellinger recalled of the weekend before the Inauguration. "I was carrying a single floppy disk from one law firm to the next. At one point, I was sitting at a computer terminal at Wilmer, Cutler, and I just started writing the order. I was typing 'I, William Jefferson Clinton . . .' and I just pushed back and said, 'God! This is what it means to win an election!' " By the time of the signing ceremony, the following Friday, in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Dellinger had written five new directives. "The President signed them almost unedited," Dellinger said. "And then my wife and I got back in the car and drove home to Chapel Hill. It was like a fantasy, a fairy tale. It was really my high point in government."

A few days later, Nussbaum, who had just been named the President's White House counsel, asked Dellinger to return to Washington to join his staff. Within a few months, Dellinger was nominated to serve as the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel, and he held that job for three years—a post that had served as a stepping stone to the Supreme Court for William Rehnquist and Antonin Scalia. For the past year, Dellinger has been the Clinton Administration's Acting Solicitor General, its chief advocate before the Supreme Court. Thus, as might have been predicted from his background and his early success, Dellinger has been well positioned to shape the Clinton legal legacy.

That legacy, however, doesn't resemble what Dellinger or many other liberal lawyers expected from this President. On civil liberties, the Clinton record resembles what might have been expected from a second Bush Administration. On civil rights and voting rights, Clinton has steered a more traditionally liberal course, but his efforts have been thwarted by the judiciary that his predecessors worked so hard to shape. The President has dashed the hopes of liberals for many reasons. His own political weakness has played a big part, and so has his lack of courage to take principled stands. Still, liberals misjudged him as more of a kindred spirit than he ever was. In any event, the past four and a half years have been very different from what Walter Dellinger thought they would be, and he will be returning home to North Carolina at the end of the summer.



The past four years weren't what Walter Dellinger expected. "It's not clear that he's that liberal," he says of Clinton.

RICHARD THOMPSON

DELLINGER was born fifty-six years ago, in Charlotte, and he still speaks in the honeyed lilt of the Piedmont. In an Administration full of bland technocrats, Dellinger has stood out. A teacher for almost his entire life, he waves his arms as if speechifying even when he is sitting down, and in the tumult his flop of gray hair always seems about to spill over his tortoiseshell glasses. He has an unfeigned passion for rock and roll. On the mantelpiece above the fireplace in his elegant suite of offices in the Justice Department, Dellinger has placed a doctored cover of *Rolling Stone* featuring a photograph of him.

Dellinger is one of only a few aides who have served Clinton throughout his Presidency, and he is a good soldier as well as a good lawyer. When he is asked about the greatest achievement of the Administration's legal team, he has a well-practiced answer. "My proudest achievement is that we will have the same Constitution when I left the Administration as when I came in," he told me during the first of several recent conversations. What Dellinger means is that he has successfully led the opposition to all the constitutional amendments that have been proposed since 1993, among them amendments on a balanced budget, prayer in schools, flag-burning, and denying citizenship to the native-born children of illegal aliens. (Clinton overrode Dellinger's counsel and supported an amendment on the rights of crime victims, which is now pending in Congress.)

Protection of the Constitution's text is a real achievement but also a modest one. Inertia—and the sheer difficulty of the amendment process—stifles most changes in the Constitution before they can become law. (Even Presidents Reagan and Bush never managed to push their favorite amendments through during their terms in office.) There have been few other major victories for Dellinger except, perhaps, his own professional survival. The casualty rates on the Administration's legal team have been high. Nussbaum, who recruited Dellinger, has been gone from the White House for years, as have three of his successors as counsel. Dellinger had a closeup view as the candidacies of Zoë Baird and Kimba Wood for Attorney General vaporized. Currently, four of the five top positions at Justice do not have confirmed occupants. Dellinger's memorandums on abortion were, in fact, among the few unambiguous legal successes of the early Clinton years, and the fallout from the failures has haunted the Administration.

The Administration's attitude toward civil liberties seems to have been shaped by a single searing event in the first days of Clinton's term—the furor over gays in the military. "There's no question the White House felt singed by that controversy," a former senior official in the Justice Department told me. So, once the Administration finally found an Attorney General, in Janet Reno, the White House surrounded her with a savvy and pragmatic coterie of senior aides who could be counted on to avoid embarrassments. The dominant figures were Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick, who had served briefly as general counsel to the Department of Defense, and John Schmidt, a Chicago lawyer who was named Associate Attorney General after Webster Hubbell was forced to step down. "The fact is, the President is actually quite conservative," Gorelick told me recently. The Justice Department was run accordingly.

This conservatism—or, at least, an extreme form of caution—has been evident in Clinton's approach to judicial nominations. Unlike Presidents Reagan and Bush, who made several high-profile nominations of outspoken law professors to the bench, Clinton has relied primarily on state-court and lower-court judges for elevation. The Administration has made diversity a priority in its judicial appointments, which have been 18.8 per cent African-American and 29.5 per cent women, compared with 6.6 per cent and 18.9 per cent for the Bush Administration, but the Clinton judges are an ideologically bland group. "The Clinton appointments are philosophically moderate," says Nan Aron, the president of the liberal Alliance for Justice, which monitors judicial appointments. "Studies show that they have the same ideological underpinnings as Gerald Ford's appointments. They're less liberal than Jimmy Carter's." Jamie Gorelick says, "On choices of judicial candidates, the President has often been more comfortable with the more middle-of-the-road, less doctrinaire candidates." Above all, judicial appointments seem a low priority at the Clinton White House. The President has avoided controversy so assiduously that he has not fought a single high-profile confirmation battle for any judicial candidate, and, while the Senate has stalled by failing to act on a substantial backlog of nominations, the President has not even submitted nominees for sixteen of the twenty-seven vacant seats on the court of appeals. Clinton's two Supreme Court appointments—the moderates Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer—will probably have a net effect on the Court similar to the effect of President Bush's two choices, David Souter and Clarence Thomas (with Souter to the left of Clinton's Justices on civil liberties and Thomas to their right).

But if caution has been the watchword on judicial appointments, Clinton has taken a hard right turn on legislative and administrative matters. He has sponsored the broadest expansion of the federal death penalty ever, and has signed the most extensive restrictions on habeas corpus—the process by which prisoners can challenge their criminal convictions in federal court—since the Civil War. He has approved the Communications Decency Act, the law designed to crack down on sex on the Internet. (On June 26th, the Supreme Court unanimously struck down its key provisions as unconstitutional.) He has signed a law that allows immigrants to be deported without seeing all the evidence against them. He has announced his support for the Defense of Marriage Act, which would bar federal recognition of gay marriages. And, in what was probably the most important civil-liberties Supreme Court case of the last five years—the 1996 Romer v. Evans decision, on the constitutionality of an amendment to the Colorado state constitution that banned laws protecting homosexuals from discrimination—Clinton's Justice Department chose to avoid the entire controversy and did not even file a brief. With the single important exception of abortion, where Clinton has remained steadfastly pro-choice, the President's record on individual rights is distinguishable from that of his Republican predecessors only in that he has been more conservative.

At one level, civil-liberties issues make nearly perfect tests of political courage, because one side is always less popular than the other. "The whole point of civil liberties is that a minority is asking the majority to accommodate it," David Cole, a professor of law at Georgetown and a frequent critic of the Administration, says. "And if you're always going to be asking Dick Morris what stand to take on a political issue you're always going to be on the other side of the people who need protection. The Administration's answer is always 'We had to do this in order to get reëlected.' But the question is 'What's the point of getting reëlected if you're going to adopt all the positions of your opponents?' "

It's not just outsiders who have questioned the Administration's resolve. Until last year, Paul Bender served as principal Deputy Solicitor General to Dellinger and, earlier, to Dellinger's predecessor, Drew S. Days III. "The impact that I saw almost as soon as I got there is what radiates out from the White House and through the Attorney General—a complete lack of principle," Bender told me. "The attitude is that there is nothing worth fighting for. Everything is pragmatic, everything is 'How are we going to look in the newspapers.' Very rarely were you told that it was your job to do the right thing. The message was always 'Don't get us in trouble.' . . . It's not a very principled Administration." Under Reagan and Bush, the Solicitor General's office drew considerable criticism for being too responsive to the Republican political agenda, but Bender considers the situation to be worse under Clinton. "Under the Republicans, they had their agenda items"—mostly abortion and affirmative action—"where you had to toe the line," Bender said. "But with Clinton there was an even broader concern about politics, and on every issue you had to be afraid of looking too liberal."

Dellinger doesn't go nearly as far in his criticisms as Bender, but he does distance himself from the Administration on certain issues. Besides the crime-victims amendment, which he opposes, Dellinger thought the government should have spoken out in the Colorado gay-discrimination case. "Nothing makes me unhappier than the fact that we didn't file in Romer," he says.

Dellinger points out, though, that many of the Administration's legal po-

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THE YOKE

don't worry   I know you're dead
but tonight

turn your face again
toward me

when I hear your voice there is now
no direction in which to turn

I sleep and wake and sleep and wake and sleep and wake and

but tonight
turn your face again

toward me

see   upon my shoulders is the yoke
that is not a yoke

don't worry   I know you're dead
but tonight

turn your face again

—Frank Bidart

sitions simply reflect the President's own politics. He says of Clinton, "It's not clear that he's that liberal." Indeed, there was initially among liberals an almost willful misreading of Clinton. "Maybe we deceived ourselves that a person of his education, who had taught constitutional law and opposed Judge Bork for the Supreme Court, would be simpatico to claims arising out of the Bill of Rights," the First Amendment lawyer Floyd Abrams says. "Maybe it was all self-deception. But it has certainly been a disappointing voyage."

The fact is that it is hard to draw a precise line between the Administration's political cowardice and its sincere conservatism. To be sure, the Administration's continuing flight from any association with the gay-rights cause—in Romer, in the marriage act, and even, obliquely, in the Internet law—seems indefensible on any but the most cynical grounds. But Gorelick and Schmidt offer no apologies for their efforts to promote a law-and-order image for Clinton. Gorelick points out that on habeas corpus, immigration, and Internet indecency the Administration's original proposals were more moderate than the bills that Congress eventually passed. Schmidt notes, "The No. 1 priority"—in the Justice Department—"was to make the federal government into a real partner of local police agencies in the effort to go after violent crime in communities around the country. During the campaign, the President was talking about putting more police on the street, and he is and was genuinely outraged by the level of violence in American communities." (Schmidt left the Justice Department earlier this year and is now running for the Democratic nomination for governor of Illinois.) The conservatives at Justice have real accomplishments to celebrate. Crime has fallen for four consecutive years, and although liberals mocked Clinton's 1994 crime bill as a purely symbolic act—for example, the bill made the murder of poultry inspectors a capital crime—Timothy McVeigh received a death sentence in federal court as a result of the changes in the law sponsored by this President.

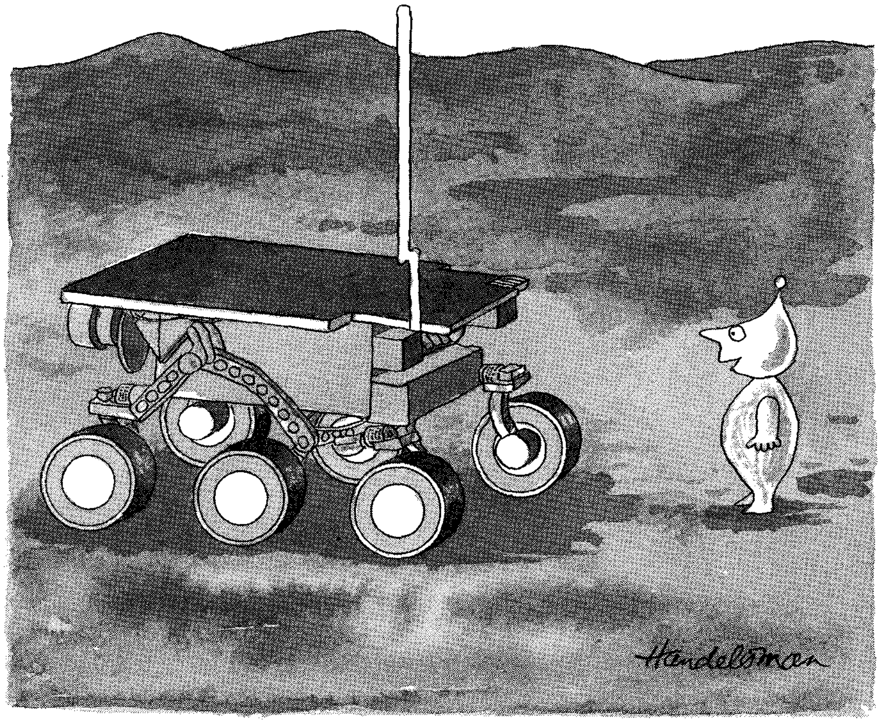
DELLINGER has an easy way with reporters and an undeniable charm. When he walked me down the hall from his office in the Justice Department to pick up some briefs from the file room, we ran into a lawyer on his staff whom I know. The lawyer asked what I was doing there, and Dellinger answered for me: "He's doing a story on how we sold out the Constitution—how we're all political hacks with no principles."

Everyone laughed, but when we were alone again Dellinger pursued the theme. "But not on race," he said. "You can't say we haven't tried on race."

The story of the Clinton Justice Department and race—especially affirmative action and voting rights—is indeed more complicated than that of the Administration's capitulations on civil liberties. Dellinger and his colleagues have regularly and vigorously supported the affirmative-action programs and racial gerrymandering that have been cornerstones of the liberal Democratic faith for a generation. But just as forcefully as the lawyers have made these arguments, the Supreme Court has rejected them. Indeed, Dellinger, through no fault of his own, may be presiding over the demise of policies that his liberal forebears devoted their careers to nurturing.

Dellinger's most important piece of writing for the Clinton Administration was probably not in any brief presented to the Supreme Court but, rather, in a thirty-eight-page memorandum he circulated to the general counsels of all federal agencies in the summer of 1995. Dellinger wrote the document in response to the Supreme Court's Adarand decision, of that year, which held that the courts should scrutinize closely—and probably strike down—many, if not most, federal affirmative-action programs. In careful, lawyerly prose, Dellinger wrote the memo to answer the simple question of whether, in light of Adarand, the federal government could still practice affirmative action at all.

His answer was maybe. The Court has consistently held that affirmative action may be used as a remedy for actual victims of discrimination, but Dellinger's memo suggests that "nonremedial" affirmative action—for instance, government efforts aimed solely at "promoting racial diversity and inclusion"—may, after Adarand, be forbidden. "It is clear that to the extent affirmative action is used to foster racial and ethnic diversity, the government must seek some further objective, beyond the mere achievement of diversity itself," Dellinger wrote. These further objectives might include, say, having a diverse police force, which would presumably make the laws easier to enforce. Left unstated in the memo is the distinct possibility that the Supreme Court as it is currently constituted may be on the verge of forbidding affirmative action altogether—of demanding a completely color-blind reading of the Constitution. Indeed, since 1995 several lower-court rulings—most notably regarding



"I'd like to say 'Hi' to my granddaddy in Roswell, New Mexico."

admissions to the University of Texas Law School—have made just that point.

The problems may be even worse for Dellinger's position on voting rights. Over the past two decades, the federal government has essentially ordered states to draw districts to produce minority-controlled seats in the federal and state legislatures. But in a number of recent decisions, including a major case from Georgia that was decided in June, the Supreme Court majority has rejected what it calls "racial gerrymandering." As with affirmative action, the Court seems headed ineluctably toward ruling on voting rights that no branch of the government may take race into consideration.

The practical implications of the struggle by Dellinger and others to keep the old civil-rights agenda alive are illustrated most vividly by the tragicomic legal saga of a single case that has spanned nearly two full Presidential Administrations. In 1989, the Board of Education in Piscataway, New Jersey, had to lay off a teacher in the business-education department of its high school. Two teachers—Sharon Taxman, who is white, and Debra Williams, who is black—had equal seniority and were otherwise equally qualified. Citing its affirmative-action policy, the school dismissed the white teacher, Taxman.

The Bush Administration took Taxman's side. The government sued the Board of Education on her behalf, and she won a judgment of a hundred and forty-four thousand dollars in federal district court in New Jersey. (Taxman was rehired by the school in 1992.) Then, when Clinton took office, the Justice Department switched sides. Deval Patrick, who was Assistant Attorney General for civil rights at the time, says, "It was my view that, in these circumstances, it did not violate the Civil Rights Act for the school board to use affirmative action based on diversity when they had to make layoffs." Last August, however, in a broadly worded ruling much like the one on the University of Texas Law School, a federal appeals court upheld the award to Taxman and suggested that many existing affirmative-action programs—that is, situations in which the government treated individuals differently because of their race—were unconstitutional. The school board asked the Supreme Court to overturn the ruling, and this spring Dellinger had to decide which side the government would finally take in the case.

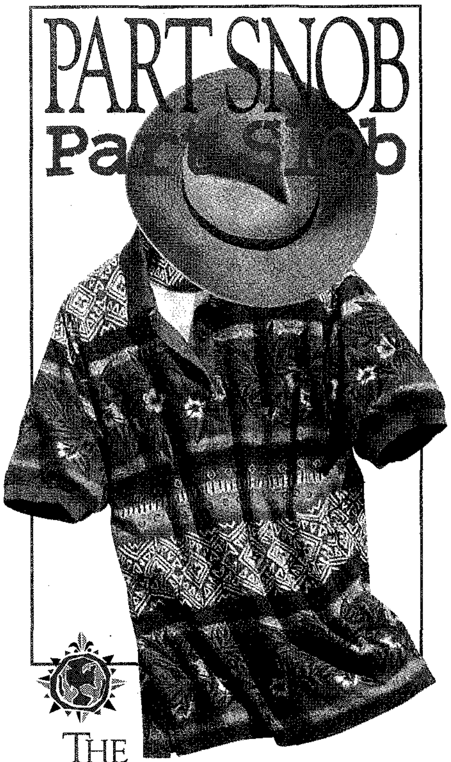
Dellinger hedged, and established still a third position. In a brief filed on June 5th, the Acting Solicitor General said he believed that the appeals court had "incorrectly decided an issue of broad national significance" when it held that the Civil Rights Act prohibits all nonremedial affirmative action in employment. Yet, notwithstanding this important failure by the court of appeals, Dellinger's brief urged the Supreme Court not to accept the Taxman case for review, because its facts were so "unusual." In other words, Dellinger argued that the Court should allow the award to Taxman to stand even though the decision was wrong.

"The Piscataway case is a disaster for us," Dellinger told me shortly before the end of the Supreme Court term. He believes that the Court is very wary about using race for layoffs, as opposed to hiring, training, or promotions, because cases involving layoffs produce very visible victims. As a matter of legal strategy, it's hard to quarrel with Dellinger's handling of the case. It's always better to dissuade the Supreme Court from reviewing a case that's likely to hurt your long-term political goals. Still, Dellinger's larger worry about the case—that the Supreme Court will recoil at seeing blacks and whites treated differently—goes to the very heart of affirmative action. In any event, Dellinger's endgame strategy for defending affirmative action didn't work. On June 27th, the final day of the Supreme Court's term, the Court announced that it would hear Sharon Taxman's case in its next term.

IRONICALLY for an Administration that prides itself on an orientation toward the future, its legal orientation looks increasingly old-fashioned on both individual and group rights. The cause of individual rights—especially gay rights and free speech—is undoubtedly stronger now than it was a decade ago, but the Supreme Court, with seven justices appointed by Republicans, showed more sophistication and courage on these issues than the Clinton Justice Department. After all, the Court last year struck down the Colorado anti-gay-rights amendment, even though the Justice Department was afraid even to file a brief in the case, and this year the Court invalidated much of the Communications Decency Act in the face of Justice's defense of the law. On group rights, especially affirmative action, future appointments to the Court may make a big difference, but the trend seems clearly away from Dellinger and Clinton's position.

Dellinger, for his part, will not remain in Washington to find out. He's leaving for personal reasons. His wife, Anne, a professor of public law and government at the University of North Carolina, joined him for his first two years in the capital but returned to North Carolina when her leave of absence from the university ran out. For about two years, they've had what Dellinger calls a "virtual marriage," but they want to resume an actual one. "I just celebrated my thirty-second wedding anniversary," he told me, "and I'd like to have a thirty-third." He'll be teaching again at Duke in the fall.

Though Dellinger is proud of his record in the Justice Department, there's no mistaking his wistfulness about how things have turned out. For one thing, he has served for the past year only as Acting Solicitor General, because President Clinton never formally submitted his name for Senate confirmation. On being asked about this, Dellinger turns uncharacteristically dodgy. "When I came in last summer, it was the middle of the Presidential campaign, and no one was going through the Senate," he told me. "And then it didn't seem to make sense to go through it this year if I was going to be leaving at the end of the term anyway." In truth, it's not clear that Dellinger could have been confirmed as Solicitor General. He has had long-standing disagreements with the senior senator from his home state, Jesse Helms, who in 1993 briefly filibustered against Dellinger's nomination to be Assistant Attorney General. It's widely believed that Helms—along with the energized Republican majority in the Senate—would fight any kind of appointment for Dellinger. In most Administrations, of course, a person like Dellinger—scholarly, accomplished, loyal—would be seen as a perfect candidate at least for a seat on the court of appeals, if not on the Supreme Court itself. Dellinger's President, however, has shown no appetite for the kind of controversy that such an appointment would prompt. "I would love to be a judge, but appointing judges is not my job, so it's not something I concern myself with," Dellinger said. Even so, he pointed out, "my chances might have been better if no one had heard of me." ♦



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PERSONAL HISTORY

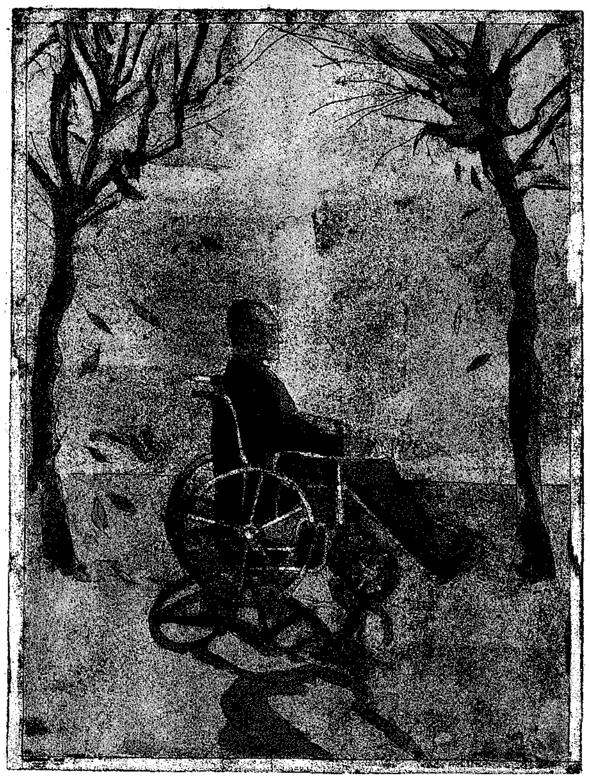
WITNESS

Last October, the author had a chance encounter with a woman he met eleven years ago—on the dark summer's night when she saved his life.

BY ANDRE DUBUS

THURSDAY during the school year is a wheelchair day; they are all wheelchair days, but some more than others. On Thursdays I drive thirty minutes to Andover, the town where my daughters live. They are Cadence and Madeleine, fourteen and nine. I go to their school and park on the road that goes through the grounds and wait for their classes to end at three-twenty. My right leg hurts when I drive; it hurts when it is not at a ninety-degree angle, and most nights it hurts anyway. While driving I have to place my foot to the left of the brake pedal and that angle makes my leg hurt sooner, and more. Often my back hurts. Years ago I learned that pain and wheelchair fatigue—*sitting*, and worrying about what can go wrong because I can't stand or walk—take most of my energy; I cannot live as normals do, and I must try to do only what is essential each day. So on Thursdays I neither write nor exercise. I make snacks for my daughters, wrap two ice packs around my leg, drive and wait, then take them to my house for dinner, then back to their house, and then I return to host a writers' workshop at my home. I like Thursdays.

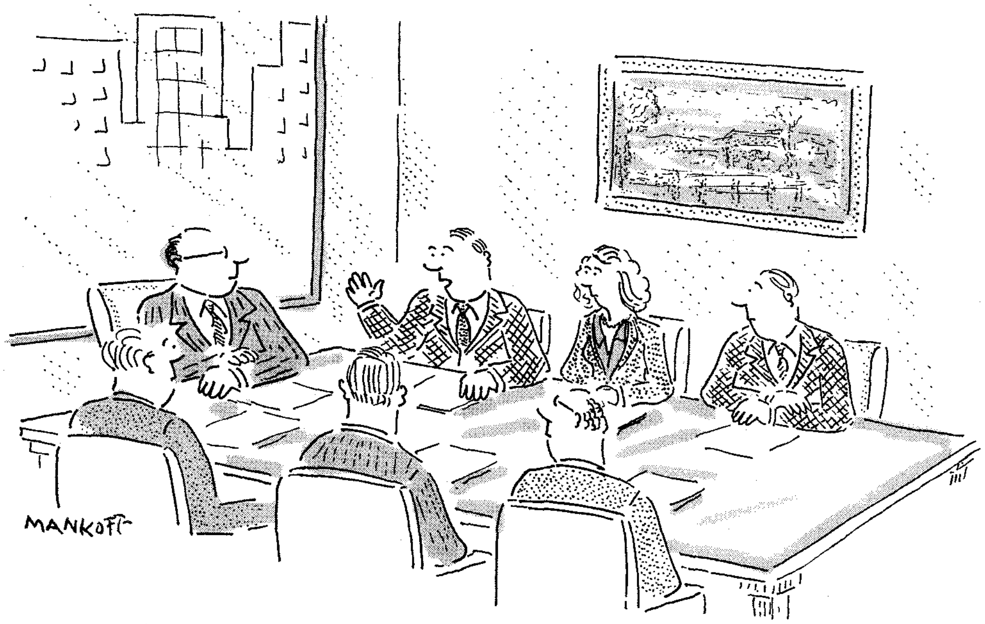
I could leave my house at two-thirty or so, and my leg would not start hurting till after three, my back not till after four, or even later, or not at all. But I try to leave by one-thirty. I bring lunch and a book, and drive to the school. I park and eat a sandwich, drink water, and read. There is no telephone. I have a car phone, which I would not have as a biped. It is harmless. It can ring only when the ignition is on, and no one knows its number; I don't know its number. In the car, I read. The pain starts. At home the phone rings and rings, and when I am writing I don't answer; but when I am reading I feel that I should answer it. But even with the pain, there is peace in the car. The moral torque is that by the time the girls come out of school the pain is tiring me. I have to be wary of impatience and irritation. A few days ago I read that a samurai philosophy is to refrain until you can respond instead of reacting. I must work on that.



For a moment I was there: a clear July night, no cars coming, everything I had to do seeming easy.

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

This fall, in 1996, there is another difficulty: The girls have a dog. And on Thursdays the dog is alone in the house and by late afternoon it needs to be walked, to relieve itself, be a leashed animal outdoors. So from school we drive to the house where the girls live with their



"On the one hand, eliminating the middleman would result in lower costs, increased sales, and greater consumer satisfaction; on the other hand, we're the middleman."

mother, and they go inside. The house has front steps, so I have never been in it. I would need a man to get me inside, probably three—depending on the men—to go upstairs to the rooms where my daughters sleep. While I wait in the car, I cannot imagine what the girls are doing in the house whose walls and ceilings and furniture and rooms do not exist as images in my mind. Inside the girls are invisible and soundless; they do not come out with the dog. I admire what I call their anarchy. I cannot make them hurry, not even to a movie or a play, which I tell them will start whether or not we are there; they remain insouciant. I am flesh enclosing tension: we have never been late for a movie or a play. In the car, my leg and back do not admire the girls' anarchy. Patience is leaving, irritation arriving. I read. Then, to my right, I glimpse motion; I look and see the girls finally coming out of the house, the brown short-haired dog ahead of them. Cadence holds the taut leash. The dog is of medium size, young, eager, wagging her tail, sniffing the air. They cross the street behind me, I watch them in the mirror, then they go through a tree line—again they are invisible—and into a large field. When they disappear I'm briefly frightened; someone could do something to them. I read, I smoke, sometimes I grunt or moan.

I want the girls to have a dog, and I want them to be happily walking the dog in the field. But I also want my leg to stop hurting. I want to be home with my leg on the wheelchair's leg rest. I want to be there eating dinner with my daughters.

A woman who was my Eucharistic minister, bringing me Communion when I could not go to Mass for more than a year after I got hit, once said to me, "Don't think about what you want; think about what you need." What do I need, sitting in this car? Courage? Patience? I can think only that I need the pain to leave me. My energy is flowing into it. And it is not bad pain. For bad pain there are good drugs. By now the ice packs are thawed. What I need, waiting for my girls, is for this part of the day to end. It does. After twenty-five minutes or so, they come through the tree line and cross the street and return the dog to their house. Time passes. Then they come out and get into the car and I drive to my home where a woman I pay is cooking dinner. It is five o'clock. The girls go to Cadence's room and shut the door and play classical music for the potted plants. They study, I answer phone messages, throw away mail, keep what I have to answer or pay. At five-thirty we eat.

On a Thursday in late October, I drove with my girls from the school to their house. The sky was blue, the air warm, and there were yellow and red autumn leaves; and at the girls' house, to relieve the pain in my leg, I got out of the car. I do this by lowering my wheelchair from a carrier that holds it on the roof. With Joan Didion's "The Last Thing He Wanted," I got in my chair and went to the front of my car, using it as a shield against the very few moving cars on this street with houses and trees. My leg rested in front of me. Soon it would stop hurting. Two young boys wearing helmets were on skateboards in the road. My daughters have new neighbors across the street. Out of that house came a brown-haired woman in her thirties, carrying a very young boy. She looked at me, then called to the skateboarding boys, told them they could not play in the street. They stalled, pleaded, then skated to the sidewalk. She looked at me again. The boy in her arms wore glasses, and was squirming. The woman came to me, looking down now at my face. She said, "I've been wanting to talk to you for some time. I saw your accident."

"You did?"

"I was with my friend at the call box."

Ten years, three months, and one day before this lovely October afternoon, between midnight and one in the morning, on I-93 north of Boston, I saw a car stopped on the highway. It was a four-lane highway, and the car was in the third lane. There was another car in the breakdown lane, and two women were standing at an emergency call box. Now one of those two women was here, and I felt as I might if she had told me that long ago we were classmates. We introduced ourselves, shook hands. She said she had just moved to this street and had been talking to neighbors and had realized that I was the man she saw that night. She saw two men hit; the other one died within hours.

She said, "You're an author?"

"Yes."

The boy, not yet three, twisted in her arms, grunted, reached for my wheelchair. His thick glasses made his eyes seem large.

"You were hit by a silver—" She named a car I know nothing about, but not the right one.

I said, "It was a Honda Prelude."

"And it paralyzed you?"

"No. Only my leg's useless. I'm very

lucky. I had three broken vertebrae in my back. But my spine was O.K. My brain." I felt that I was reciting; as I spoke I was seeing her at the call box while I drove up to the driver's side of the car that had stopped, the last one I ever walked to. "Where were you coming from?" I asked.

"Joe's American Bar and Grill. My friend and I ate there, and had some drinks."

"The one at the mall?"

After we see a play, my girls and I eat at a seafood restaurant near Joe's at a mall; I was imagining us doing that, connecting places with this woman standing beside me.

"No. In Boston."

"Where were you going?"

"Andover. I haven't driven the same since that night."

"Neither have I."

The boy was strong and kept turning, lunging, reaching. She said, "I have to get his stroller."

She carried him across the street and into her house, and I sat among fallen leaves near the curb and looked up at yellow leaves and branches and the sky, and saw the woman and her friend at the restaurant, then at the call box. The two skateboarding boys were not ten years old; since that night she had borne three sons; and my daughter Madeleine had been born. The woman came out with her son strapped into a stroller and crossed the street. The boy reached for the leg rest of my chair. She said, "He goes to a special school. He sees a lot of kids in wheelchairs."

"What's wrong with him?"

"Probably autism. He's too young for the tests."

He was looking at a book with pictures. Then he started tearing it, its cover, too; he tore it in half, then into quarters. He was concentrating, grunting. I said, "He's very strong."

She smiled, and said, "They aren't supposed to be able to tear them."

"He's got a life in there."

"Oh, he does. It's me who's frustrated. Because I can't talk to him. And I know he's frustrated because he can't talk."

The girls came out with their dog and looked at me and the woman, and I said, "Have you met your neighbor?" They came to the sidewalk, and I said, "She was there the night I got hit."

Madeleine looked intently at her; Cadence's mouth opened, and in her cheeks color rose, and she said, "You *were*?"

I saw in her face something that was in my soul, though I did not know it yet; I felt only the curiosity you might feel on hearing an unusual sound in the dark outside your window; Cadence looked as though she had just heard something painful, but it had not yet fully struck her. I introduced the woman and her son to my girls, then they went off with their dog. I looked up at the woman, seeing her beside the highway watching me fly over the car, land on its trunk. My blood wanted to know; it rushed. She said, "The woman in the broken-down car was running around in the highway."

"She was standing in the speed lane. I was trying to get her off the road." The man who died was her brother.

For a moment I was there: a clear July night, no cars coming, everything I had to do seeming easy. I said, "I'm glad you had already called the state troopers. They saved my life. I might have bled to death."

"Someone else would have called."

"Maybe. But *after* I was hit."

The boy was trying to get out of his stroller; he reached for my leg rest, for a wheel of the chair, lunged and twisted in the straps.

"I have to take him in," she said.

I wanted to ask her what she saw, but I could not; it was like waiting to confess something, waiting for that moment, for the words to come. When I got hit, I did not lose consciousness, but have never remembered being hit, only flagging down a car for help, then lying on its trunk.

I watched her cross the street with her son and, at her stairs, lift him from the stroller and carry him inside. I began reading again. Soon a car turned the corner behind me and stopped at the woman's house; I watched a man go inside; he was not big, but his shoulders and chest were broad, and he walked with an energy that sometimes saddens me. When my daughters and their dog returned from the field, I moved to my car door, put the leg and arm rest into the back seat, and got in. Before I raised the wheelchair to its carrier, the man came out of the house, carrying his son, and walked to me. He reached over the wheelchair and we shook hands and exchanged names. His face did not have that serious look of some men, as though all play were gone from their lives, and

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there was only work, money, the future they may not be alive for. He was a man who could be joyful. I can now see his face more clearly than I see his wife's; when I try to remember her, I see her standing at the call box, a body whose face I could not see in the night.

"My wife said she talked to you."

"It's incredible. I've never met anyone who saw me get hit."

"She called me that night. What's it like for you, after ten years?"

"It's better. I'm used to some things. I still can't drive alone to Boston, at night on 93."

"Oh, that's a protective device."

"Really? You mean I don't have to think of myself as a wimp?"

"No, no. I believe everything we have is a gift."

We talked about his work, and his son, who was moving in his arms, and he said he'd like to have a beer with me sometime; he would get me up his steps. I told him I would like that. In his face were the sorrow and tenderness of love as he strongly held his writhing son, looking at the small face that seemed feral in its isolation. We shook hands and he went inside.

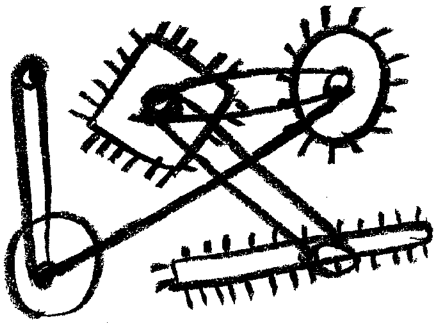
I STARTED the car, picked up the switch that's attached to a wire on the floor, and pressed it, and the carrier on the roof lowered, two chains with an elongated hook, which I inserted into a slot under the chair's seat. I flicked the switch again, this time in the other direction, and the chains pulled the chair up. But when it reached the frame of the carrier, it stopped. The motor was silent. I released the switch, tried it again. It clicked. The chair did not move. I kept pushing the switch. Its click was disproportionately loud, a sound without promise; yet I kept doing it. The chair was too high for me to reach it and try to take it off the hook, and a thirty-inch metal frame was jutting out from my car.

This is why I have a car phone: for circumstances that require legs. My son-in-law, Tom, is a mechanic. I called him, thirty minutes away in southern New Hampshire. He said he would come. I was calm. I have never been calm when the wheelchair carrier fails, and usually I am not calm for hours after Tom has fixed it. But that day I was calm, maybe because I had started the day by going to Mass—this always helps—or maybe because my spirit was on the highway on the twenty-third of July in 1986.

I would not have the time to be rescued, then drive my daughters to my house for dinner at five-thirty. My daughters were still inside. When they came out, I told them, and we kissed goodbye, and they went back inside. I phoned the woman at my house, and said we would not need dinner. I read Didion. Tom came in his truck, looked under the hood, worked there for a while, then said it was fixed, for now, but he would have to get a part. My knowledge of things mechanical is very small: pens, manual typewriters, guns. I drove home, feeling that I was on the circumference of a broken circle whose separated ends were moving toward each other. Soon they would meet. Next time I saw her, I would ask everything.

AROUND seven-twenty, writers began arriving for the workshop, and some of us waited on the sundeck for those still on the road. I told them about the woman and said that next time I would ask her if she saw me get hit; when I heard myself say that, I was suddenly afraid of images I have been spared, and I said no, I would not ask her. We went to the living room, and I told the story again, to the people who had not been on the deck; this time, as I talked, curiosity and wonder left me, as though pushed out of my mouth by the dread rising from my stomach. I looked at the faces of the women and men sitting on the couch, the love seat, the window seat; we formed a rectangle. I was alone at one end. I felt faint, as if I had lost blood. I said, "I think I'll go into a little shock tonight, or tomorrow."

But I was calm that night, and Friday, and Saturday. On Sunday we had a family dinner with three of my grown children, their spouses, the oldest son's two small children, and Cadence and Madeleine. That morning the sky was blue, and I was on my bed, doing leg lifts. When I swung my leg and stump up for the fiftieth time, I began quietly to cry. Then I stopped. I made the bed, dressed, ate yogurt and strawberries, showered, dressed on my bed. The tears were gone and would not come back, but my soul was gray and cool, and pieces of it were tossed as by a breeze that had become a strong wind and could become a storm. I drove to the girls' house. They live on the corner of the street, and when I turned onto it I saw the woman in her yard. She was doing some kind of work, her back was to me, and I looked away from her, at the girls' house, and I phoned them to say I'm here.



At my house we cooked on the grill, and I sat on the deck, my face warmed by the sun, and talked with my children and enjoyed the afternoon. I looked up at my two sons and told them of suddenly crying while doing leg lifts, of being fragile now, and as I talked to them I made a decision I never make, a decision about writing, because my decisions usually gestate for months, often more than a year, before I try to write anything: I told them I would start writing this on Monday, because meeting the woman, shaking her hand, hearing her voice, seeing her sons, especially the youngest one, and shaking her husband's hand, hearing his witness—*She called me that night*—had so possessed me that I may as well plunge into it, write it, not to rid myself of it, because writing does not rid me of anything, but just to go there, to wherever the woman had taken me, to go there and find the music for it, and see if in that place there was any light.

Next day I woke to a wind that brought sorrow and fear and rain, while beyond the glass doors in front of my desk the sky was blue, and leaves were red and yellow, and I wrote. For ten days I woke and lived with this storm, and with the rain were demons that always come on a bad wind: loneliness, mortality, legs. Then it was gone, as any storm. They stop. The healing tincture of time, a surgeon told me in the hospital. On the eleventh day, I woke with a calm soul, and said a prayer of thanks. While I wrote this, the red and yellow leaves fell, then the brown ones, and the nights became colder, and some days, too, most of them now in late November, and I did not find the music. Everything I have written here seems flat: the horns dissonant, the drums lagging, the piano choppy. Today the light came: *I'm here.* ♦

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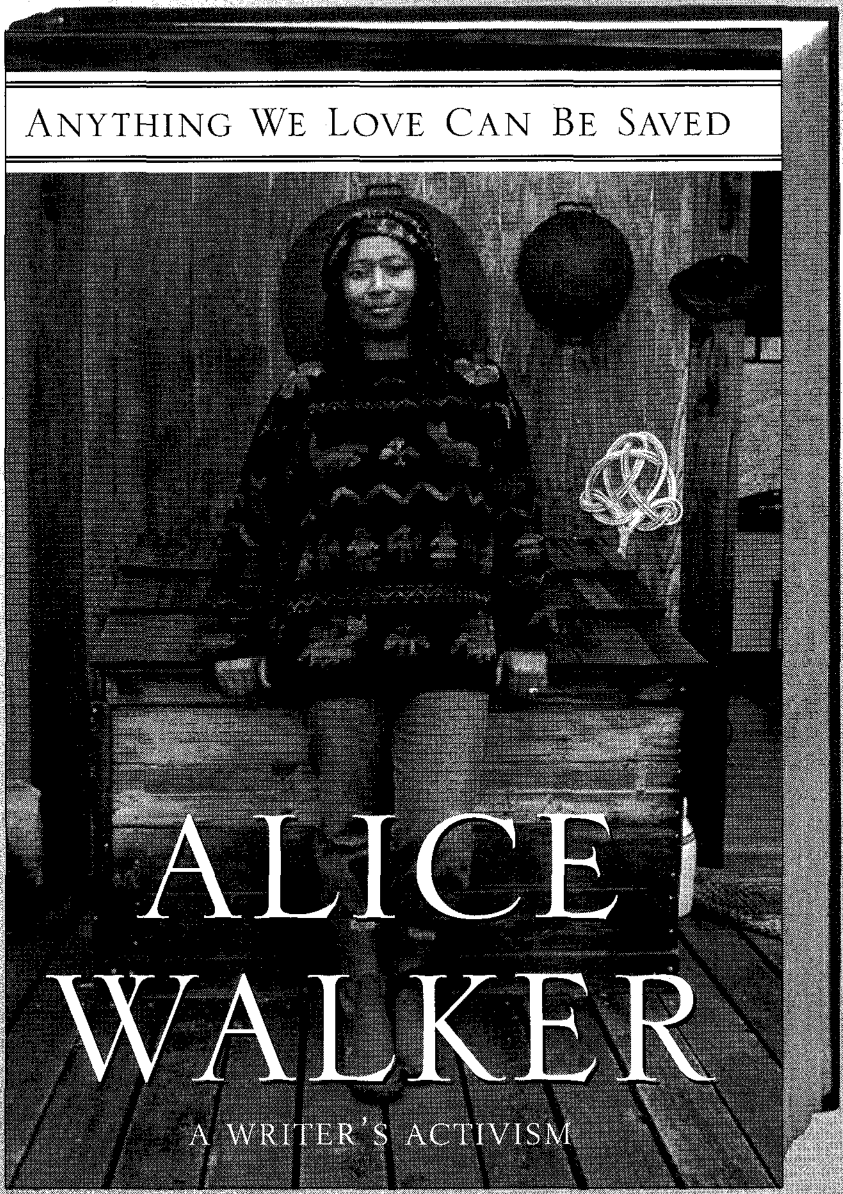
— ALICE WALKER



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A REPORTER AT LARGE

COMING OUT AT CHRYSLER

What did Ron Woods, a U.A.W. electrician, set in motion? Something Detroit thought it would never see.

BY JAMES B. STEWART

TRENTON ENGINE is one of the largest machine-tool factories in the world—a three-square-block complex south of Detroit that employs thirty-five hundred workers and builds the engines for most Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, and Eagle products. The Trenton assembly line operates twenty-four hours a day, in three shifts, and life there, dominated by the United Auto Workers, is rigidly hierarchical—based on union job classification and seniority. The U.A.W. leadership has historically embraced social change, notably during the civil-rights struggles of the sixties, but the rank and file have traditionally been socially conservative, suspicious, even hostile, toward blacks, war protesters, women—anyone thought of as different—and that conflict has often been played out on the factory floor.

Though memories of the harsh recession of the early eighties remain vivid, the years since have been boom times for Chrysler and its hundred and twenty-six thousand employees. After Ron Woods reported for work there as an electrician, in 1987, he was often able to work seven days a week, twelve hours a day. During one stint in 1989, Woods worked eighty-three days straight. That year, he earned fifty-five thousand dollars, at $14.82 an hour. The job enabled him to replace his aging Renault Alliance with a new Chrysler New Yorker and, in 1990, to make a down payment on a house.

Woods, who is now thirty-seven, is clean-cut and trim—about five feet nine and a hundred and thirty-five pounds—and he says his size distinguishes him from many of his more burly colleagues on the factory floor. He has two junior-college degrees—one in commerce and one in electronics—and these also set him apart from most of his co-workers, for whom high-school diplomas are the rule. From the day Woods arrived at Chrysler, he tried his best to fit in. From time to time, he bought doughnuts for his co-workers on the way to his shift, which began at midnight. When he completed his first ninety days with the company—a probationary period that earned him job security under the union contract—he celebrated by buying pizza for his unit. The pepperoni spelled out "THANKS GUYS." A co-worker, a twenty-one-year Chrysler veteran, pulled him aside and said, "I don't know how you've done it, but everybody likes you, and that ain't easy here." Woods was eager to please his superiors, and he earned a string of sterling job-performance evaluations, which he has proudly saved.

But for all his friendliness Woods evaded personal questions. "You laugh at the queerest things," a co-worker once observed, and the reference to "queer" in the otherwise innocuous comment made Woods nervous. There was no doubt in Woods's mind that anyone who was gay would be ostracized. There had been an uproar at the plant when a forklift operator had a sex-change operation, and then began to use the women's bathroom. (She was relegated to another women's bathroom, used by office workers.) Another co-worker was attacked and beaten one night after leaving a gay bar. When the man returned to work after being hospitalized for reconstructive surgery, Woods overheard comments like "He would have been better off if he died."

The first time Woods asked for a week's vacation, he explained that his girlfriend had won a trip to the Bahamas. "Way to go, take the time off," his supervisor said, slapping him on the back. In truth, it was a man he met at a gay bar who had invited him on the trip.

As months passed and his fictitious girlfriend never materialized, Woods could sense a subtle shift in attitude. Co-workers grew more distant. Then, in April, 1990, after three years at the plant, Woods spent hours one hot day finding and installing a part needed to get one of the assembly lines back in operation. Afterward, Woods recalls, he sought refuge from the heat in the air-conditioned office of the foreman, Tony Neubecker, where he and Neubecker were joined by Mack MacDonald, a toolmaker on the line. Neubecker weighs more than three hundred pounds, and MacDonald weighs about two hundred and ninety. "What took you so long?" MacDonald asked, in an angry tone. "What kind of electrician are you?"

Woods was bewildered. "I couldn't find a part," he stammered, but MacDonald kept badgering him. Woods looked to Neubecker for support, then said, "Why don't you leave me alone?"

With that, MacDonald jumped up from his chair and backhanded Woods hard across the face.

Woods was stunned, angry. "Did you hit me?"

"If I wanted to hit you, you'd be dead," MacDonald replied, according to a grievance Woods later filed detailing the incident. "I can take you outside this office, bend you over, and fuck you in the ass if I want. Or I can wait for you after work and fuck you up."

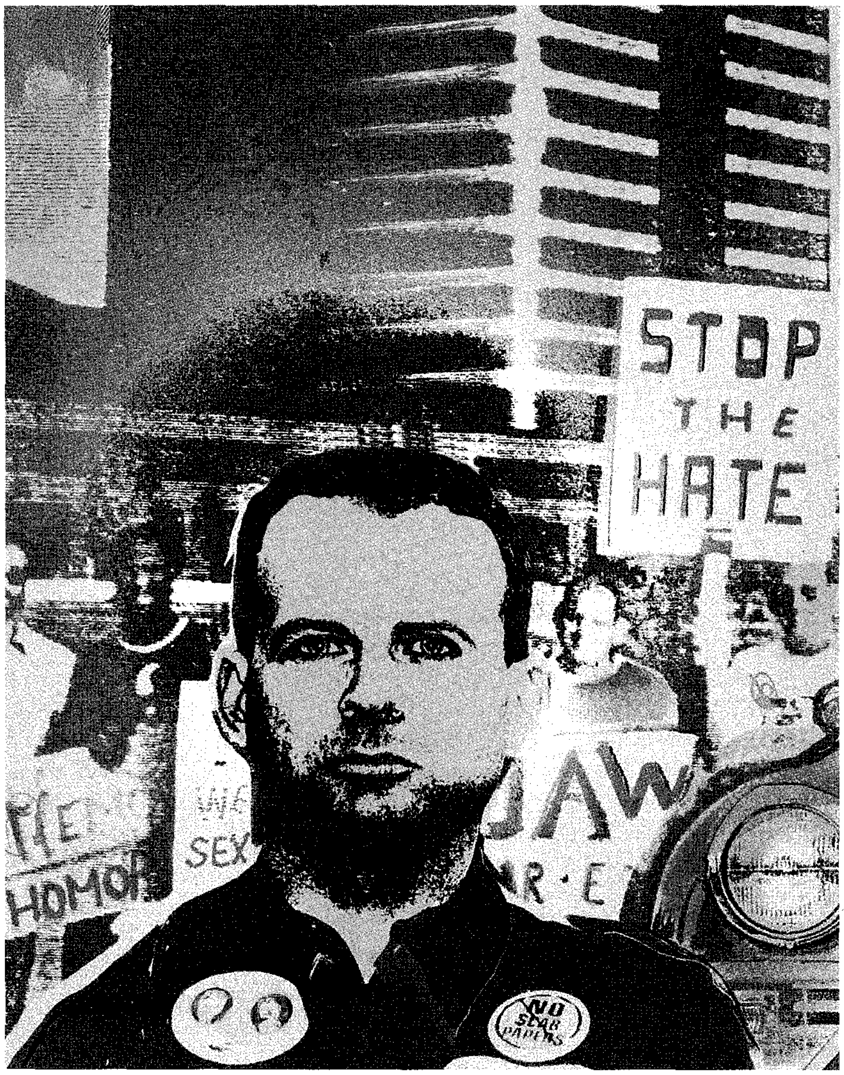
Woods turned to the foreman. "Could you call security?"

"You don't tell me what to do," Neubecker replied.

"You saw him attack me and you won't call?" Woods asked, incredulous.

"I didn't see anything."

MACDONALD has disputed Woods's account, but also agreed to leave him alone. Since then, Woods says, he has been physically attacked four times, received threats on his life, endured countless taunts and insults, and had to be transferred from Trenton Engine on account of increasing hostility. He is still employed by Chrysler—in the company's Technology Center, at corporate headquarters, in Auburn Hills, Michigan—but the experience has transformed him from passive conformist to determined reformer to angry activist. He is now doing something that no one has done before: leading a crusade to secure job protection for gay employees at Chrysler. In that way, he is in the vanguard of a remarkable emergence of gay people within the auto industry. He has picketed Chrysler's headquarters, blitzed its chairman, Robert J. Eaton, with letters and complaints, and founded an organization called the Campaign for Equal Rights at Chrysler, which this past May picketed Chrysler's annual shareholders' meeting, in Seattle. His most notable success has been advocating his cause within the United Auto Workers. Last spring, Woods delivered a rousing address against job discrimination at the union's triennial bargaining convention, and succeeded in adding protection against job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation to the union's final contract-negotiating planks.



Woods has picketed the company's headquarters, blitzed its chairman with letters and complaints, and founded an organization for gay rights.

GARY POWELL

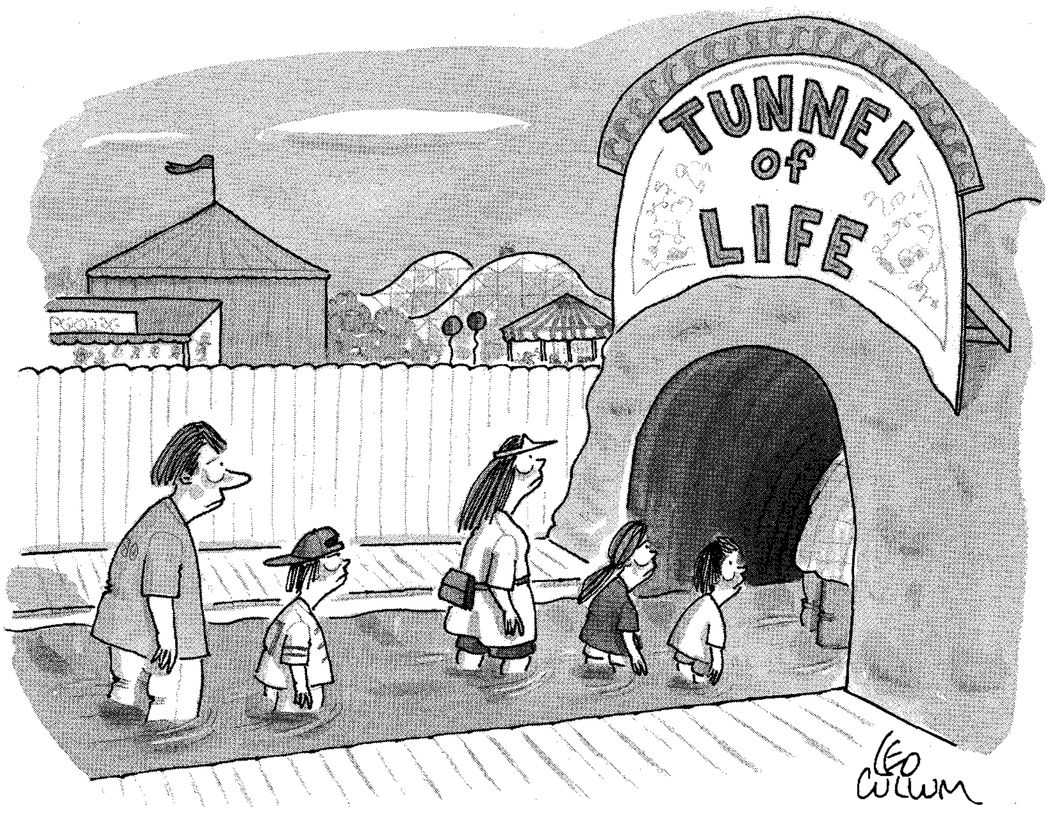
Ron Woods's visibility, if not always his confrontational tactics, has encouraged others. Chrysler now has another gay employees' organization, People of Diversity. Composed mostly of non-union, managerial employees, it was modelled on a similar organization that had been formed recently at Ford. Perhaps most startling was the decision of a much admired vice-chairman of Ford, Allan Gilmour, to disclose his homosexuality in an interview last winter with *Between the Lines*, a Detroit monthly. Gilmour had already retired from Ford, but continues to serve on the boards of five major corporations.

Many people in Detroit are astounded that gay ferment has reached the auto industry. Car and truck manufacturing is "probably the most conservative industry in the country," says Jeff Montgomery, whose father, a Chrysler executive, warned him that being gay could ruin his career. Montgomery heads the Triangle Foundation, a lesbian-and-gay civil-rights group in Michigan. Phill O'Jibway, who is the managing editor of *Cruise*, a Detroit-area gay-and-lesbian weekly, says, "I'm astonished that any of this is happening in Michigan. I thought this would be the last place on earth. I grew up here. . . . It has a lot to do with the conformist corporate culture that this area is famous for, as well as the heavily blue-collar conformist culture."

Nevertheless, most gay and lesbian autoworkers remain in the closet, for fear of discrimination and even violence on the factory floor, if not in executive suites. Michigan is one of thirty-nine states with no job protection for gays and lesbians; federal legislation to extend job protection to gays and lesbians failed in the Senate last year by a single vote. Despite Woods's success in obtaining union support, Chrysler refused to include sexual orientation as a protected category in a new three-year contract it entered into with the U.A.W. last year, and the U.A.W. capitulated. Though People of Diversity has adopted a policy of non-confrontation, Chrysler has yet to sanction the group as an official employee organization—a sanction that would entitle members to meet on company property and use company resources such as bulletin boards. (Its counterpart at Ford has company sanction.)

Even as Chrysler earlier this year issued several statements pledging non-discrimination, the company got caught up in two public controversies that brought into question the company's stance. *Esquire* cancelled publication of a short story by David Leavitt planned for the April issue—a story that contained explicit gay material—after its publisher warned the editor that Chrysler would withdraw its advertising. In March, Chrysler cancelled its previously scheduled advertising on an episode of the ABC series "Ellen" in which the main character would reveal that she is a lesbian.

As the fourth-largest advertiser in the country, Chrysler is highly visible, and its status as a major consumer-products firm makes it especially averse to controversy that might trigger the kind of boycott re-



cently proclaimed by the Southern Baptist Convention against the Walt Disney Company, because of the company's perceived support for gay and lesbian employees. (Disney owns ABC, the network that airs "Ellen.") In addition, many Chrysler executives are simply squeamish when it comes to homosexuality, a topic that remains off limits in polite Midwestern society, and thus they were unprepared for the idea that gay-rights advocates would prove to be as zealous and well organized as the religious right.

Based on his experience at Ford and as a corporate director, Gilmour says that in most old-line, conservative industrial companies, homosexuality "is an issue that is never brought up." By contrast, many high-technology, media, and entertainment concerns have prohibited discrimination against gays and lesbians for years; I.B.M. has had such a policy since 1974. Of Ford, Gilmour said, "If I'd taken a poll of key people, many of them would have been very uncomfortable about homosexuality, the subject in general. They would wish the subject would disappear."

Last month, I flew to Detroit, rented a black Dodge Intrepid, and visited Woods at his home, in Huntington Woods, an attractive Detroit suburb known for its large Jewish population and tolerant attitudes. His house is a pleasant split-level just across the street from a public golf course. In the front yard was planted a large sign saying "No News or Free Press Wanted Here"—a reference to union trouble at Detroit's major newspapers. Woods was quick to volunteer that he had dreamed all his life of living in a house this nice, and was grateful to Chrysler and his union for making it possible.

Beneath his polite and somewhat self-deprecating manner, I sensed both anger and determination—and growing despair. Woods is someone whose efforts have already produced remarkable results in the auto industry, but he is not simply a gay version of Norma Rae, the heroic textile-industry-union activist portrayed onscreen by Sally Field. In recent months, his continuing complaints of gay bias have cost him the support even of his most loyal friends at work, who charge that Woods is using his sexual orientation to demand, and get, preferential treatment. Once seen as a rising star within the U.A.W., he has now lost the support of his union local. Just before I arrived, he told me, he had received a letter informing him that his union membership had been suspended for two years. "My being gay makes regular guys insane," he says. "I don't know why. I was being backstabbed constantly. A co-worker finally pulled me aside. 'Don't you understand? Everything you do is wrong. People talk about you all the time. They give me a hard time for working with you. You have no support.' "

Woods at first had tried to ignore the antipathy he felt, but he could not forget the incident with MacDonald in the foreman's office. In June of that year, Woods took a rare weekend off. He invited his parents, recently retired, to visit him in his new house, and he planned to attend a Gay Pride celebration. Woods had never told his parents that he was gay, and when he blurted it out to his mother she burst into tears. "Promise me you'll never tell your father," she said. Woods was upset by her response, but he agreed. Despite his mother's reaction, Woods participated in the Gay Pride event.

Then, a few months later, he read in the newspaper that Cracker Barrel, a Tennessee-based restaurant chain, was opening a branch in the Detroit area. It was also firing gay and lesbian employees for failing to "demonstrate normal heterosexual values," according to a company memo (a policy it has since reversed). Woods was furious. "I said, 'Oh, yeah?' This is U.A.W. country, this is workplace-rights country." Eager to participate in some kind of protest, he started making the rounds of the few gay and lesbian organizations active in the Detroit area at the time. Nothing had been planned, and no one seemed interested in making any visible move. The vice-president of the Detroit Area Gay and Lesbian Council, Woods learned, was still in the closet; one of its board members, an executive with thirty-five years at General Motors, used a pseudonym in making any statement related to the gay organization.

So Woods organized a protest on his own. He persuaded a gay-and-lesbian restaurant to provide meeting space. He got *Cruise* to advertise organizational meetings. He handed out thousands of flyers at gay bars. The day of the grand opening of Cracker Barrel, Woods walked into the Trenton Engine plant and saw his picture in someone's Detroit *Free Press* along with an article about the protest, to be held that afternoon.

He felt "elated, but it was scary," he said. "I was worried about what could happen to me at Chrysler." Job security was Woods's main anxiety. When he was a freshman at Michigan State University, his father's business had collapsed. Woods dropped out of school and, with his parents, moved into a mobile home.

As Woods walked through the plant, he saw numerous copies of the paper, but no one called out to him. In the employee staging area, he saw a fellow-electrician, Jim Sloan, reading the article. Sloan looked at it, he looked at Woods, he looked down at the article again. "Ron," he finally asked, "did you know your picture and name would be in the paper?"

"Yeah," Woods said. When Sloan didn't reply, Woods added, "Thanks for mentioning it." Sloan said nothing further.

At the grand opening of Cracker Barrel, a hundred and twenty-five protesters showed up, Woods prominent among them. He carried an American flag and a sign saying "Unfair to Labor." Local reporters and photographers covered the event. The next day, when Woods arrived at work, a large poster had been taped up above his usual chair. It showed a muscular man—Woods thinks it may have been a Calvin Klein model—wearing nothing but bikini briefs. Not long after that, a pipe fitter tried to pick a fight with Woods on the factory floor. Work rules on the floor, encrusted by years of ritual and collective-bargaining restrictions, provided ample opportunity for disputes, and now Woods seemed constantly embroiled in them.

About seven months after his picture appeared in the paper, a janitor, Robert Thompson, threw a pail of water over Woods's feet while he was sitting in the staging area reading a newspaper. "Get out of here," Thompson said, preparing to mop the floor. Woods complied, but later, when he returned to his seat, he said to Thompson, "Is there any way you could be a little more polite?"

"I don't have to be," Thompson replied.

"No, but you could be," Woods said.

With that, Thompson, who was about Woods's height but much stockier, grabbed Woods by the neck, as if he were trying to strangle him, and then threw him backward. Woods interviewed a couple of the witnesses to the incident, including his fellow-electrician Jim Sloan, and they said they would give statements supporting Woods to labor relations. Still angry, he reported the incident to the local police when his shift ended. The police report was picked up in a local newspaper, but the paper didn't mention Woods by name. "A 32-year-old Huntington Woods man walked into the Police Station on Wednesday afternoon and said he had been assaulted that morning," the story began. The next day, when Woods arrived at the staging area, someone had posted the news report. Scrawled above it were the words "Ron Woods, faggot."

No action was taken against Thompson. When questioned by union representatives, the witnesses to the event, including Sloan, said they hadn't seen anything. Woods says he approached Sloan, whom he considered as much of a friend as anyone involved, and asked him as politely as possible why he hadn't been willing to say anything. "Ron," Sloan replied, "what do you expect when you stand up for a bunch of queers?"

Woods had never been taunted at school or in previous jobs. He says he was psychologically unprepared for what now seemed like an unrelenting stream of abuse, and he sought psychiatric treatment for depression at the Henry Ford Medical Center. In a report to Chrysler's workers' compensation department, Woods's doctor and social worker there stated that after rumors spread that Woods was homosexual "it appears that Mr. Woods began to be the object of harassment by many co-workers," which ranged in form from "lack of support from management to outright physical violence and threats of severe violence." They found Woods to be "stressed and distraught," and concluded that his condition was "likely" to be related to his employment.

Woods approached his union representative to file a formal grievance detailing various incidents. Woods's union committeeman, Mike Harrald, one of about ten black union members in Woods's unit, was one of the few who seemed sympathetic. He said, "Ron, ninety-seven per cent of the men I represent are white. I'm black. I know about bigotry." He filed the grievance on Woods's behalf.

Before it could be acted upon, however, Harrald concluded that it was un-

"Oh, all right, dear. For the sake of argument, let's say there is another woman, whom I'll call Muffy."

safe for Woods to keep working at Trenton Engine, and in August, 1992, he was transferred to the Technology Center in Auburn Hills. Woods says he approached a few people at Trenton to say goodbye. "People were cold and distant," he recalls. "I had a small list I wanted to say goodbye to, but the first two didn't seem to care, so I left." As he was walking out, two millwrights drove by on a cart and yelled "Asshole."

CHRYSLER'S corporate headquarters was a different world from Trenton, one dominated by managerial, white-collar workers rather than by the assembly line. Woods's work shifted from production to construction and repair; additions and renovations at the complex were constant. In general, levels of education were higher, and co-workers were more sophisticated.

Unbeknownst to Woods, though, virtually everyone at his new job had already heard he was gay, and that disclosure had triggered a wave of revulsion. A fellow-electrician, Bill Witmer, recalls being told even before Woods arrived that he was gay and being advised not to work with him. Of many fellow-workers, Witmer says, "They're one step from the Klan, if not in the Klan. They're hostile, very against gays. People went crazy over this." In 1993, the Secret Service was called in to Chrysler's corporate headquarters after a worker there threatened to kill President Clinton if he followed through on his promise to permit gays in the military.

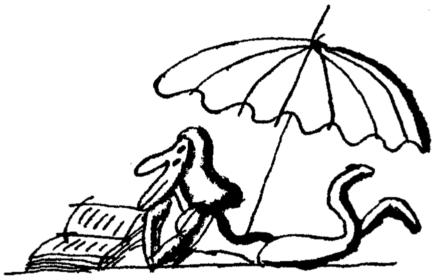
Initially, Woods was shunned. Suspecting that a picture of the Cracker Barrel protest which had run in *Solidarity*, the U.A.W. magazine, had tipped off his co-workers, he spoke to the editors there about his plight. The conversation led to an article on Woods in the January/February, 1993, issue, which identified Woods as gay and praised his efforts to fight discrimination. "We were trying to say that what was happening to Ron was wrong," says Michael Funke, the *Solidarity* reporter who wrote the article.

Witmer, for one, was gradually won over. "I never worked with anyone gay or homosexual," Witmer says. Though he's married and has four children, he says he could empathize with Woods's plight, because he often felt singled out owing to his height, six feet ten, and his weight, three hundred and fifty. "You feel like an outsider except in a basketball game," he says. Another convert was a newly hired electrician named Terry Kremkow, who was assigned to be Woods's partner after everyone else refused to work with him. Kremkow recalls that his supervisor warned him Woods was gay and apologized for the assignment. "Is he like a Jehovah's Witness?" Kremkow asked, referring to the religious denomination's aggressive proselytizing efforts. "Then I'll have a problem. If not, I couldn't care less." Their friendship even reached the point where Kremkow joked, "If I see a good-looking guy, I'll let you know." Kremkow told other workers that Woods's personal life "doesn't matter," and said, "We're here to build cars."

This sort of tolerance was slow to spread among Woods's co-workers. One afternoon when Kremkow came into the lunchroom, he was confronted by Malen Marcum, an air-conditioning repairman and former head of the union in Woods's work unit. "How are you and your little faggot buddy Ron Woods?" Marcum asked in a loud voice, which brought conversation in the room to a stop. "Has he given you head lately?" A fight between the three-hundred-pound Marcum, who rides a Harley-Davidson and wears steel-toed boots, and Kremkow, a serious bodybuilder, seemed imminent, but Kremkow defused the situation by saying, "You're the one with the earring and the ponytail."

Kremkow's car was vandalized in the Chrysler parking lot on a number of occasions. After work one day, Marcum tried to kick Witmer in the groin, leaving bruises on Witmer's leg. Witmer filed a police complaint over the incident, and Marcum later pleaded no contest to assault and battery. He was suspended by Chrysler for six months without pay.

While Marcum acknowledges feeling hostility toward Woods and his allies, and concedes that he may have taunted them, he says the rancor had more to do with their being electricians who, he contends, were stealing overtime work from air-conditioning people like himself than with Woods's being gay. He denies beating Witmer, but acknowledges pleading no contest and being suspended because Chrysler didn't believe his version.



ANTI-GAY sentiment wasn't confined to hourly workers. One of Woods's supervisors, Michael Conlon, who was in charge of handing out work assignments, mocked Woods to his co-workers with limp-wristed gestures. According to Woods, another supervisor, Mark Hardy, often criticized Woods's work, made threatening gestures, and was overheard by another worker denouncing Woods's gay activism. As his union steward, Kremkow filed a grievance against Hardy on Woods's behalf, and Woods was transferred, unwillingly, to another work area. As a result of a subsequent incident, Hardy and Woods were instructed not to speak to each other.

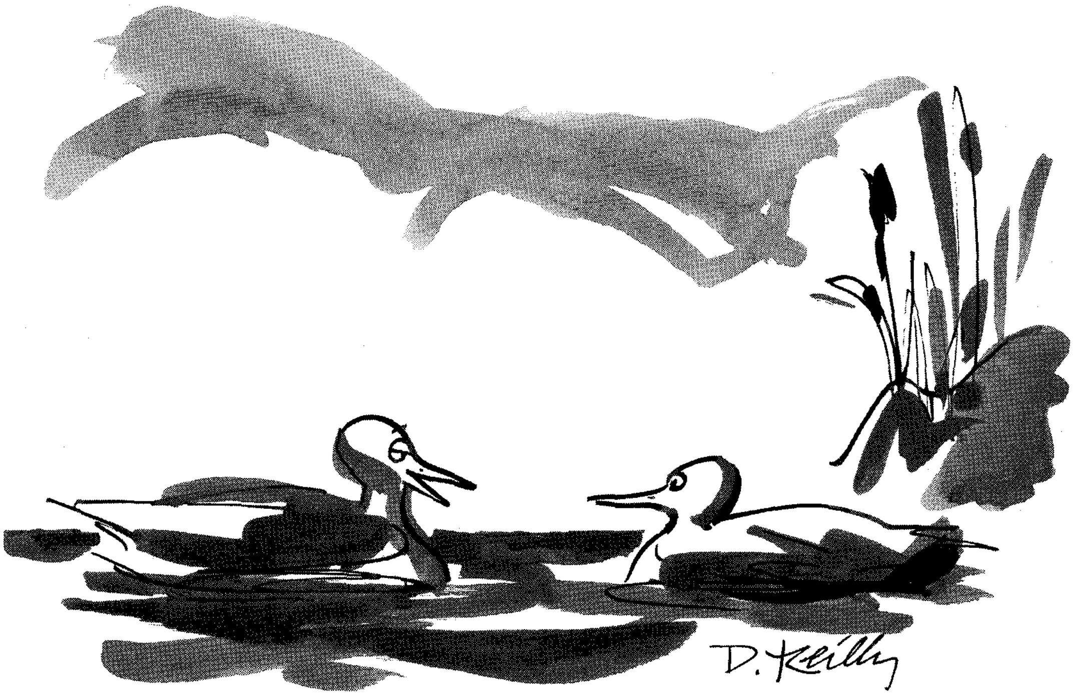
Woods says that he tried to ignore all this and do his job, but that he worried about other gay employees suffering in the plants—people like Martha Grevatt, a lesbian, who was a tool-and-die maker at a Chrysler plant near Cleveland, and Dave Reckinger, a procurement analyst in Chrysler's Service and Parts Division, both of whom had got in touch with Woods after reading the article about him in *Solidarity*. One of five women tool-and-die makers in a three-hundred-person department, Grevatt told Woods she'd been the victim of a stream of anti-gay harassment at work. Among other incidents, a co-worker kept a spray can on his workbench labelled "Dyke Repellent"; crude poems and pornography regularly appeared at Grevatt's workstation. The union took up her complaints, but Chrysler management argued that it could do nothing, because it couldn't prove who was responsible. Angered by the inaction, Grevatt filed charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 1990 alleging sex discrimination, a category covered by federal law. The E.E.O.C. declined to proceed, however, when Chrysler argued successfully that Grevatt was being harassed for being gay and for her political views—neither of which is protected by law—rather than for being female.

Reckinger told Woods he'd concealed his sexual orientation since the early seventies, when a co-worker forced him at gunpoint to perform oral sex. Reckinger called the police, who advised him not to press charges; Reckinger, shaken, agreed. The next workday, he reported the incident to Chrysler management and to his union representative, but both said there was nothing they could do because the incident hadn't occurred on Chrysler premises. Reckinger had to endure more humiliation: the co-worker subsequently boasted to others about what he'd forced Reckinger to do. And though it all happened more than twenty years ago, Reckinger said, he had never got over it.

These and other stories, and Woods's own experience, spurred him to act, and he focussed, for the first time, on his own employer and industry. In August, 1994, he wrote the first of several letters to Chrysler's chairman, Robert Eaton. In it he said, "I realize that I am indeed fortunate to have been transferred to C.T.C. This is a good place to work. I often ask myself if I should just be silent and ignore the fact that others are still at risk of intense harassment and discrimination. I have decided that I will not be silent. On moral grounds and partly because I now realize that even here at C.T.C. I am not properly protected, as sexual orientation is not included in any Chrysler policies."

Woods received a polite letter from Nancy Rae, then the manager of workforce diversity at Chrysler, stressing the point that Chrysler "encourages and values diversity, mutual respect, trust, and integrity." Woods interpreted this as a rebuff.

Woods's complaints were also referred to Monica Emerson, a twenty-one-year Chrysler veteran who is the current manager of workforce diversity. Woods and Kremkow met with Emerson, and, according to Kremkow, the interview got off to a bad start. "You don't understand what I'm going through," Woods complained. Emerson, who is black, retorted, "You're looking at the color of my skin and telling me I don't know what you're going through?" Woods recalls, "Monica sat across the table and told me we don't need protection, we don't need it in writing, because Chrysler won't tolerate discrimination. Give me a break. I've been attacked five times."



"We're canards on my mother's side."

• •

THE next year, Woods shifted his focus from Chrysler management to the union. In April, 1995, in what initially seemed a hopeless quest, he ran for the office of delegate to June's United Auto Workers' constitutional convention, in Anaheim, and to a special bargaining convention the following year, which would determine proposed contract provisions. Woods threw himself into the effort, printing campaign flyers, developing a seven-plank platform, and giving monthly speeches at the union hall. He emphasized his devotion to the union, noted that his father and two older brothers were union men, and declared that he wanted the union to be more politically active. Terry Kremkow campaigned on his behalf, and was instrumental in swaying many voters. None of Woods's literature mentioned any gay issues, but when the inevitable question came he was prepared. "I hope it doesn't matter, because I care about these issues," he said, referring to his platform.

One of Woods's opponents in the race was the openly homophobic Marcum, who had recently returned to work after his suspension, and he tried to make Woods's sexual orientation an issue. He filed a complaint with Chrysler management, which he then made public: in it he alleged that Woods had leaned over a partition in the men's room to stare at Marcum's penis. No one seriously believed that Woods would provoke someone like Marcum, and the allegation backfired by stirring sympathy for Woods. (Marcum insists that Woods did look at him "suggestively.")

The election result reflected a remarkable transformation from the days when no one wanted to work with Woods. When the votes were tallied, Woods received eighty, to seventy-three for his closest opponent, who was a longtime Chrysler employee. Marcum got only thirty-one votes—a humiliating defeat. Kremkow referred to Woods the next day as "the giant-killer," and Woods recalls it as "the happiest day of my life."

Despite this electoral success, little would have happened without support from the president of Woods's local, Derek Thiery, whom Woods called immediately after the election to say that he wanted to add two words—"sexual orientation"—to the contract. Like many members of the U.A.W. leadership, Thiery has championed civil rights and progressive social causes to a much greater degree than the rank and file have done. He was impressed by Woods's election. "For him to run for delegate, with his background, and win, that made me proud," Thiery says. He was sympathetic, but urged Woods to gain the support of the local's civil-rights committee first. The committee had been fending off Woods's proposals for some time, but now, with Thiery's encouragement, it approved his resolution by a vote of five to one, with one abstention.

That summer, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force held its annual conference in Detroit, and there Woods met Shelley Alpern, a research analyst at the Franklin Research & Development Corporation, in Boston, and told her about his campaign. Alpern, who is thirty-two, is a former human-rights fund-raiser who has shifted her focus from Central America to corporate America. Franklin Research & Development describes itself as North America's largest money-management firm devoted solely to socially responsible investing, and has about five hundred million dollars under management, including some shares of Chrysler stock. While the position is relatively modest, it gives Franklin's clients the right to mount proxy challenges. Alpern was then negotiating with Johnson & Johnson, the pharmaceutical manufacturer, and was threatening to mount a proxy fight unless the company banned discrimination against gays and lesbians (which it ultimately did), so she was keenly interested in Woods's progress at Chrysler. He seemed optimistic that the U.A.W. would prevail.

Passage of Wood's sexual-orientation resolution sent it to the next step—the joint council—and there Thiery himself spoke in support. It passed without opposition. Woods addressed the special bargaining convention in Detroit the following spring, the first openly gay person ever to speak at a national convention of the U.A.W. Woods spent seven hours the night before rewriting and practicing his speech. Martha Grevatt travelled to Detroit from Cleveland to lend him moral support. At the end of his speech, many of the delegates stood in support. The resolution passed by voice acclamation.

As word of the talks' progress trickled down to the rank and file, however, Woods began to worry that the sexual-orientation plank wouldn't end up in the final contract. Nothing definite was said, but he noticed that his frequent calls to the union leadership, and even to his staunchest supporter, Thiery, often went unreturned. (Thiery says it is union policy not to comment on negotiations in progress, and that Woods's calls were so persistent that Thiery ordered him not to call him at home.) Drawing on his experience at the Cracker Barrel protest, Woods proposed picketing Chrysler's corporate headquarters in support of the union demand for the sexual-orientation plank. Though the union usually looks askance at single-issue picketing, Thiery gave Woods permission.

On August 28, 1996, about two weeks before the contract was due to expire, five people showed up outside the headquarters building: Woods, Reckinger, a straight friend of Reckinger's, and two members of PFLAG (an acronym for Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), who had no connection to Chrysler. "Where's everybody else?" Reckinger asked apprehensively. Although a handful more eventually showed up that day, Woods never did muster more than a dozen protesters at any one time.

At first, the protest attracted scant media attention. Still, Woods had big plans: he assumed that the serious bargaining would begin whenever the U.A.W. declared a strike deadline. He began making preparations to hold an all-night candlelight vigil. But then he heard on CNN that the U.A.W. had reached agreement with Chrysler without even a strike threat.

The next day, at a meeting to discuss the new contract, he managed to talk to Jack Laskowski, the U.A.W. vice-president in charge of the Chrysler negotiations. Laskowski broke the news that Woods's provision had been rejected and would not be part of the new contract. Laskowski told Woods that he had personally taken to Robert Eaton three final demands that could not be resolved at the negotiating-subcommittee level. Two were what Laskowski called "economic" issues, meaning that they would cost Chrysler hundreds of millions of dollars. The chairman accepted those. Then Laskowski raised the issue of sexual orientation. He says now that it was "unusual" that such an issue, which on its face would cost Chrysler nothing, would even reach Eaton's level. Yet Eaton refused to accept the U.A.W. position, according to Laskowski, arguing that Chrysler had no intention of discriminating, so such a provision was unnecessary. Laskowski "negotiated hard" on the issue, but "they were dug in on it," he says. "To me, their position didn't make any sense. I can't give a rational answer for why they took the position they did." (Chrysler now says it doesn't want to "keep the focus on specific groups," although the collective-bargaining agreement already does protect certain groups, such as women and blacks.) Thiery, who bargained at the committee level, says Chrysler management argued vehemently that gays should not be a "special group" with "special privileges." He adds, "It was a knockdown, drag-out yelling issue." Faced with the choice of accepting the contract as it was negotiated or calling for a strike against Chrysler, Laskowski accepted the contract. Thiery puts the issue bluntly: If the U.A.W. had

CO-PRODUCTION

From 1917 to 1937, the painter Georgia O'Keeffe and the photographer Alfred Stieglitz were engaged in an artistic and erotic (and domestic) pas de deux, the evidence of which emerged, decades later, as a monument of modern art. Stieglitz made more than three hundred prints of the face, hands, and body of his model and muse, but he never composed them into a final portrait. In 1978, O'Keeffe herself, at the age of ninety, did the editing: "Georgia O'Keeffe by Alfred Stieglitz," a stunning corps of fifty-one images, went on view at the Metropolitan Museum to great acclaim, and the exhibition's book received unstinting accolades. (Janet Malcolm, reviewing it in these pages, said that "innocently opening" it was "like taking a little drive in the country and suddenly coming upon Stonehenge.") The Met show will be reprised, with thirty additional photographs (and a new edition of the book), starting July 25th. This week, the much anticipated Georgia O'Keeffe Museum has its grand opening in Santa Fe.

Georgia O'Keeffe, 1932

GIFT OF GEORGIA O'KEEFFE THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF THE GEORGIA O'KEEFFE FOUNDATION AND JENNIFER AND JOSEPH DUKE, 1997.

"Your four-o'clock is here."

called for a strike over the sole issue of gay rights, "we would have been skinned alive."

Woods was dejected. "My rights in the workplace were given away," he said. When the heads of the various locals met to vote on the contract, Woods showed up and argued that without an antidiscrimination clause it should be rejected. The contract was nonetheless unanimously approved, and Woods's continuing opposition to the contract angered Laskowski. "I was upset with him," Laskowski says. "I told him, 'You've gone too far on this one.'" Thiery, too, saw a change in Woods. "There was a transition where Ron went from being a strong advocate for his cause, someone who spoke with intelligence and reason, to being an extremist, not just in his speech but in his emotional state."

Woods's campaign did not sit well with his constituents on the factory floor, either. They wondered what had happened to the platform on which Woods had campaigned. Kremkow has since observed, "People said, 'All we hear is gay, gay, gay. You told us to vote for him.' I said, 'Maybe I made a bad judgment on character.'"

As a loyal union member, Woods was expected to suppress his personal feelings and support the new contract. Instead, he vowed that the picketing of Chrysler's headquarters would continue, even without U.A.W. support. The following day, alone and in the rain, Woods was back on the picket line.

IT wasn't just members of Woods's local who were disenchanted with his picketing. Earlier that spring, Woods had received a call from Michelle Marquis, an engineer at Trenton Engine, and Mike Myers, a systems engineer working at headquarters. The two, both in their twenties and members of a gay swim team, had discussed forming a gay employees' organization modelled on the group at Ford, and then had heard about Woods. Woods urged them to write a letter to Chrysler's chairman, to come out publicly, to join his campaign, and, eventually, to take part in his picketing.

But Woods's plan "wasn't what we envisioned," Marquis explains. "We wanted a group the company would sanction as an employee group. It wouldn't sanction a group that it thought was organizing against it." Moreover, while Marquis and Myers had told colleagues that they were gay, most members of the group they were forming weren't remotely ready for so public a step as picketing Chrysler headquarters. Myers and Marquis also recognized a cultural gulf separating them from Woods. They were white-collar college graduates, management employees; Woods was suspicious of anyone outside the union. They had not endured what Woods had gone through on the factory floor. About the worst incident that Marquis recalls was telling a co-worker she was a lesbian and receiving the reply "But you're too pretty to be gay." Marquis says, "We could understand where Ron was coming from, and why, but we didn't feel he understood us."

During the summer of 1996, Myers got in touch with Monica Emerson, Chrysler's diversity manager, looking for guidance. Then, when Woods began his picketing, Myers and Marquis drafted a letter to Chrysler management outlining goals for their organization, in which they tacitly tried to distance themselves from what they considered Woods's radical tactics. Marquis, in contrast to Woods, found Emerson to be "very accepting, very willing to talk about things, very honest. She was blunt—she said it was going to be hard to convince some people, and timing would be an issue." Emerson has since told me that she very well may have urged patience and indicated that it was a difficult subject for the Chrysler management. "This is a topic that may in fact make some people uncomfortable," she said. "It takes time for them to learn about it and to become comfortable."

Others were less patient, however. Alpern, the shareholder activist in Boston, was dismayed when Woods told her that his bargaining initiative had failed. She wrote to Robert Eaton on October 4th, saying that "we are greatly concerned that Chrysler does not include sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination policy and has recently rejected the U.A.W.'s demand that it do so." She argued that nondiscrimination simply makes good business sense for Chrysler, not only in that it boosts gay and lesbian employee morale but in that negative publicity hurts sales to gay customers. (Alpern noted that Toyota, Subaru, and G.M.'s Saturn are marketed aggressively to the gay community; Subaru acts as a corporate sponsor for the Rainbow Card, a credit card that donates a percentage of its revenues to gay and lesbian community groups.)

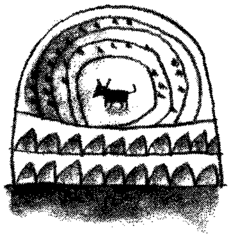
Alpern's letter triggered a flurry of negotiations. "At first, they were very hesitant," she recalls. "I couldn't get any clear answers." She told Chrysler in November that she was encouraged by their discussions, but she also said that she felt she had no choice but to file a shareholder resolution, to be included in proxy statements, calling for steps designed to end discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation at Chrysler. Chrysler's response was to try to block the resolution at the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Nevertheless, even while opposing Alpern at the S.E.C., Chrysler issued a series of letters and statements to employees which addressed her concerns. On November 11th, Chrysler mailed a statement from Eaton to each employee stating that sexual orientation was to be included within the company's policies promoting tolerance for diversity. Alpern's response to the move was that she wanted to see something more concrete. In January of this year, Chrysler's vice-president for employee relations, Tom Gallagher, and the U.A.W.'s Laskowski signed a letter acknowledging that Eaton's letter was "consistent" with the collective-bargaining agreement. Finally, Chrysler revised its Standards of Conduct and its Code of Ethical Behavior to include sexual orientation. Alpern agreed to withdraw the proposed shareholder resolution. She calls the measures "a good first step."

The measures may reflect a moral commitment, but they could also insulate Chrysler from employee lawsuits alleging discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Potential legal liability appears to be the main reason that many companies have opposed legislation making such discrimination illegal. (Chrysler has never taken a position on such legislation.) Even Alpern concedes that "there are numerous frivolous lawsuits," yet she maintains that it's hard to imagine repealing laws outlawing discrimination on the basis of race, sex, or religion simply because many of the complaints lack merit.

Predictably, gay employees had differing reactions to Chrysler's letters and pledges of non-discrimination. Marquis is pleased. Myers finds them encouraging, but he left Chrysler just before Eaton's letter was sent out, because other contract employees, who received less favorable job evaluations, had repeatedly been hired for full-time positions ahead of him. Woods denounces them as a sham meant to divert attention from the real problem of virulent homophobia at Chrysler. Still, his picketing effort came to an end on November 26, 1996—not, he emphasizes, because he was satisfied with Chrysler's policy statements but because the weather got too cold.

MONICA EMERSON says that, apart from Woods's highly visible protest, she has received few complaints from gay employees at Chrysler. While she says she cannot discuss Woods's situation, K. C. Hortop, a lawyer for Chrysler, said, "We do, in general, deny his allegations of mistreatment by Chrysler." Emerson continues, "I can't discuss specific numbers, but complaints about gay discrimination are very, very few. Of course, even one is too many." She says that all disciplinary actions are confidential, so she can't give any examples of investigations undertaken or punishment meted out for anti-gay harassment. "We recognize that in a company the size of Chrysler there may be incidents of inappropriate behavior," she says. "We do take swift and severe corrective action when we find it is warranted and appropriate." Other than Marcum, none of the people Woods has complained about have been demoted or suspended, though a few were told not to bother Woods.



One reason that there haven't been many complaints from gay employees may be that few employees are willing to identify themselves as gay. A contract worker at Chrysler was told that his contract had expired the day after he registered a sexual-harassment complaint with Chrysler's diversity department. (Chrysler says his departure had nothing to do with the fact that he's gay or that he filed a complaint.) I spoke with a number of gay Chrysler employees, from various levels of the company, and was told of more—employees who believe that they or people they know have suffered from anti-gay bias but would not identify themselves as being gay, out of fear of even worse repercussions.

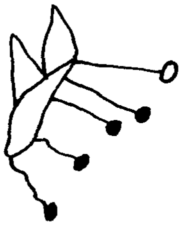
Some gay employees at Chrysler have made use of a Web site that Woods created. He has received messages from about twenty people citing incidents of what they felt was discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, but many of those who responded to the site have also asked not to be named, no doubt out of fear.

Allan Gilmour, the former Ford vice-chairman, told me that he wouldn't have revealed his homosexuality if he had still been employed at Ford. "I would not have come out at the company. That would not have been appropriate. I was aware of a few other gay executives. They thought it would be inappropriate, dangerous to their careers." Even though Gilmour himself had remained in the closet and, as vice-chairman, had long been viewed as the heir apparent to Ford's chairman, Harold Poling, he was passed over for the top job when Poling retired, in 1993. Gilmour says he was told "he lacked the breadth of operating experience" needed for the job. Others in the Detroit business community, however, believe that the Ford family would not accept a gay chairman. A Ford spokesperson, Francine Romine-MacBride, says that the company won't comment on such speculation but suggests that Gilmour's "very distinguished career at Ford" speaks well to the company's tolerance for gay executives.

Whatever their personal feelings about gay rights and workplace issues, Chrysler executives repeatedly say that their only goal is to sell as many cars and trucks as possible. In this effort, Chrysler, like many other large consumer companies, uses its enormous advertising clout to make sure its ads don't appear in contexts that might alienate potential buyers. Chrysler says that in recent years it cancelled scheduled ads on TV shows that focussed on the O. J. Simpson trial and, before that, on the Gulf War, because feelings about those subjects had become so polarized. Homosexuality falls into the same category. Even as the company was issuing its statements pledging non-discrimination, reports that Ellen DeGeneres, the star of "Ellen," was a lesbian and that her character might come out of the closet on national television caused consternation in Chrysler's marketing department, since

Chrysler is a major sponsor of "Ellen" and had committed to advertising on a number of episodes.

"When something takes on a life of its own, it's not a good media environment," says Megan Giles, a Chrysler spokeswoman who handled the "Ellen" controversy. "There was extreme hype in the media about this. It was very polarized. You were annoying people by even being mentioned in the same sentence." Chrysler's concern about controversy was borne out on March 27th, when Robert Eaton received a letter from Jerry Falwell demanding that Chrysler cancel its ads and never advertise on "Ellen" again or face a consumer boycott. Giles says that by the time Chrysler received the letter from Falwell it had already made the decision to drop the ads.



Perhaps inevitably, Chrysler's action set off exactly the kind of controversy that the company had said it hoped to avoid. There was widespread media interest, even though Chrysler was hardly the only major company to cancel ads. (General Motors, Johnson & Johnson, Wendy's, and J. C. Penney were among those who did, but they managed to avoid much of the publicity.) "We had lots of inquiries," Giles says. "Major newspapers, TV, tabloids. We were somewhat surprised. When something like this becomes a referendum on what your company is about, it comes as a surprise. Our intent is to sell the most vehicles we can to the most customers and not alienate anyone. Why would we want to be in the middle of a controversy?"

Marquis and other members of People of Diversity now questioned the sincerity of Chrysler's tolerance for gay employees, and even considered issuing a statement on the subject to the national press. "It was frustrating," Marquis says. "People told me they felt sick."

Alpern, too, was upset. "As soon as the ink was dry" on the non-discrimination declarations, "they violated the spirit of them," she says. "That was very disappointing, and I sent a letter to them to that effect."

A few weeks earlier, *Esquire* was reported to have killed the David Leavitt story because of pressure from Chrysler. Another Chrysler spokesperson, Terri Houtman, explains that although Chrysler, like many large advertisers, insists that magazines in which it advertises (including *The New Yorker*) notify it of potentially controversial articles, neither Chrysler nor its advertising agency in New York knew anything about the *Esquire* piece or the decision to cancel it. "We just heard that in an editorial review there was concern that advertisers may wish to move," Houtman says. Still, she confirms that if the story did contain graphic gay sex Chrysler would have pulled its ads from that issue (though not, she emphasizes, from subsequent issues of the magazine) for much the same reasons that it cancelled its "Ellen" ads. (Ed Kosner, *Esquire's* editor at the time, has said he killed the story for editorial reasons.)

While Chrysler's actions seemed to placate the religious right—the company heard nothing further from Falwell—the negative reaction from gays, lesbians, and their supporters came as a surprise. Chrysler was flooded with calls, both against and in support of their action regarding "Ellen." According to Giles, Chrysler has had to reconsider the long-held notion that religious conservatives are better organized, more likely to call for a boycott, and pose a more serious threat to sales than other special-interest groups. The gay-rights advocates "appear to be equally well organized," Giles says. "Once they got their bearings, they were prolific. They're prepared to do battle." Caught between gay advocates and the religious right, she says, "We don't want to pick a fight with either one."

Chrysler resumed advertising on "Ellen" shortly after the controversial episode aired, even though subsequent episodes continued to explore gay themes. While Chrysler hasn't yet decided about next season, it is continuing to advertise this summer. "We like the demographic we're getting," Giles says. "That's what we're interested in, not anybody's life style."

THE "Ellen" and *Esquire* controversies reinforced Woods's suspicions about Chrysler's intentions. But they also seemed remote. "Managing a bookstore in Southern California"—what TV's Ellen does for a living—"is worlds removed from working in a factory. It's dreamland," he told me.

The depth of his personal struggle had been clear since May of 1996, just a month after his successful speech at the U.A.W. convention: he decided to run for shop steward, even though that meant running against Terry Kremkow, who considered himself Woods's best friend at the plant. Kremkow was hurt and angered. This time, Woods had trouble mustering support. According to Kremkow, "People figured out that everything he ran for was strictly for the gay movement." Woods was asked frequently about what some co-workers now referred to as his "gay-rights shit." He, in turn, accused co-workers of homophobia. Bill Witmer tried to warn Woods. "Not everyone is against you," he said. "Some people are hurt. They never did anything to you. Be careful. The people who do accept you for being gay—you're going to turn them against you."

The evening of the vote, Woods called the union hall where the votes were being posted. "Give me the bad news," he remembers asking.

"Well, let's put it this way," replied the man who was tallying the votes. "Did you vote for yourself?"

Woods was stunned. "Don't tell me I only got one vote."

After hanging up, Woods cried.

Woods's friendship with Kremkow quickly deteriorated. That November, while continuing his picketing, he reported for work, and his supervisor confronted him with a computerized list of incidents of alleged tardiness. Woods concedes that the picketing made him three to five minutes late on several occasions, but says such delays were common. He expected Kremkow, as his shop steward, to back him up, but when Kremkow was summoned, Woods says, he sided with the supervisor. Kremkow says that such lists were routine and that Woods was not being treated any differently from others. Woods asked to speak to Kremkow alone, so the two went out into the hallway.

Both Kremkow and Woods were highly agitated and shouted at each other. Woods says that Kremkow shoved him hard against a drinking fountain. Kremkow claims that Woods tried to taunt him, saying, "You want to hit me, don't you?" Each denies the other's account. After the altercation, the two returned to the conference room, where Woods's supervisor and security personnel were waiting. "Ron, are you O.K.? You don't seem right, you're acting bizarre," Woods recalls the supervisor saying. Security asked Woods if he required medical assistance and he said, "Yes." He was taken to the hospital, observed for six hours, and released.

Woods, now bereft of both management and union support, compounded the problem by filing a grievance against Kremkow alleging "conduct unbecoming a union member." After a one-day trial in January, a tribunal of union members found Kremkow "obviously innocent" of Woods's charges. But the internal rift and the trial traumatized Woods's local. Kremkow says, "People are paralyzed. There's now more fear of Ron than vice versa. They're afraid he's going to make an allegation. I was afraid for my job." He continues, "I don't care if someone is black, green, or gay. I resent that he's hiding behind his sexual orientation. That's what everyone else feels after the trial."

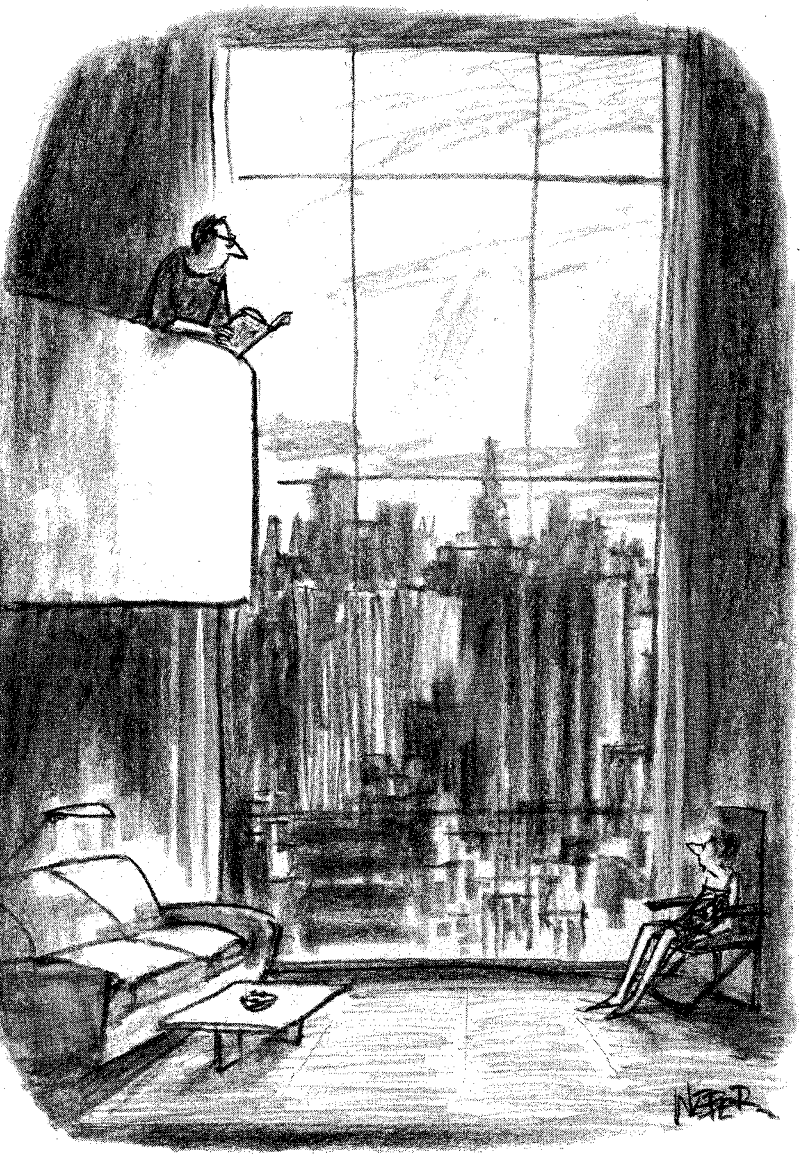
Kremkow then charged Woods with maliciously filing charges against another union member. Woods was found guilty. For this reason, he explained the day I visited him, he had just been suspended from his union for two years. "It breaks my heart," he said. (Both Woods and Kremkow are appealing the ruling; Kremkow wants Woods expelled.)

Woods now seems blinded by his sense of injustice, and his effectiveness at Chrysler and in the U.A.W. is waning. He says he feels lonely and isolated, is having trouble sleeping, and has begun taking antidepressant medication. In early May, he arranged an extended medical leave, and is getting counselling. He says he has trouble believing that it has come to this. "I never meant to be an activist," he says. "I grew up poor. My father worked fourteen-hour days and lost his business in the 1980 recession. We lost everything. I wanted a car that would work, a house. I just wanted a decent life."

His colleagues, even former supporters, see things differently. "Ron could have been a national advocate, depending on how he handled himself," Thiery says. "He still could be. But instead he just went over the edge." Woods's co-workers on the second shift were recently asked to attend diversity training, in which they were told not to make anti-gay comments or gestures. "Some people made fun of it," according to Witmer. "A lot of guys were pissed off. They think Ron should quit his bellyaching." Witmer says that even he is distancing himself from Woods to stay out of the controversy. "I've got to work with these guys, too," he explains.

Still, Woods's activism, by the standards of corporate America, has already brought about significant change at Chrysler, and his presence in their midst has made his co-workers some of the most gay-aware factory workers in the country. Everyone I spoke to in Woods's unit described a shift from ignorance about gays and lesbians and overt hostility toward Woods to at least grudging acceptance. Even Marcum says his thinking about gays has changed. "His being gay is not my problem," he says. "They have their way of being. I don't have to accept it, but this is America."

In this regard, the autoworkers may be significantly ahead of top Chrysler management. During late May, two high-ranking Chrysler executives met with Marquis, another member of People of Diversity, and Monica Emerson to discuss the group's goals. It was the first time representatives of gay and lesbian employees had discussed their issues with senior management. Emerson reports, "There was some laughter, some blushing, some embarrassment over the topics that were being raised." ♦



"I like New York, but I miss having a screen door."

OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

IN DARWIN'S WAKE

The author travels to the Galápagos—a place he never wanted to be—and follows the footsteps of the nature writer he never wanted to read.

BY DAVID DENBY

Two anecdotes, both concerning Charles Darwin's mouth:

When Darwin was a student at Cambridge, he was interested less in books and laboratories than in mucking about in ponds and poking at dead logs. During his three years at the university, from 1828 to 1831, he attended precisely one course of lectures in the natural sciences—botany—and spent the better part of his time in long walks or rides in the country. Among his circle of friends, naturalism was a popular hobby, rather like drinking at Ivy League colleges in the nineteen-twenties: bravado was built into the sport. The young men filled their rooms with stuffed swans and the pupae of moths, and they also created a rather peculiar eating club, the "Glutton" club, at whose meetings unspeakable meals were served, consisting of animals "unknown to human palate"—hawk and bittern and, most terrible of all, owl.

Another of Darwin's escapades, though unrelated to the proceedings of the Glutton club, provided a kind of dessert. Some of the men collected insects—"entomologising," they called their jaunts—and Darwin was quite competitive about this. "One day on tearing off some old bark," he recalled in his autobiography, "I saw two rare beetles and seized one in each hand; then I saw a third and new kind, which I could not bear to lose, so that I popped the one that I held in my right hand into my mouth. Alas it ejected some intensely acrid fluid, which burnt my tongue so that I was forced to spit the beetle out, which was lost, as well as the third one."

No one would suggest that a mere willingness to put vile things into one's mouth accounts for greatness. But the two stories provide a hint to a rather large mystery: How could this placid, half-educated, wealthy country boy, tall and strapping but rather ugly, and far from brilliant as a young man—a little dense, even—have become the most radical and disruptive thinker of the nineteenth century? Karl Marx seems today a shadowed and limited historical figure, whereas Darwin is entirely contemporary. What he learned may affect everything we desire and everything we forget, what we wish to do and what we do not wish to do.

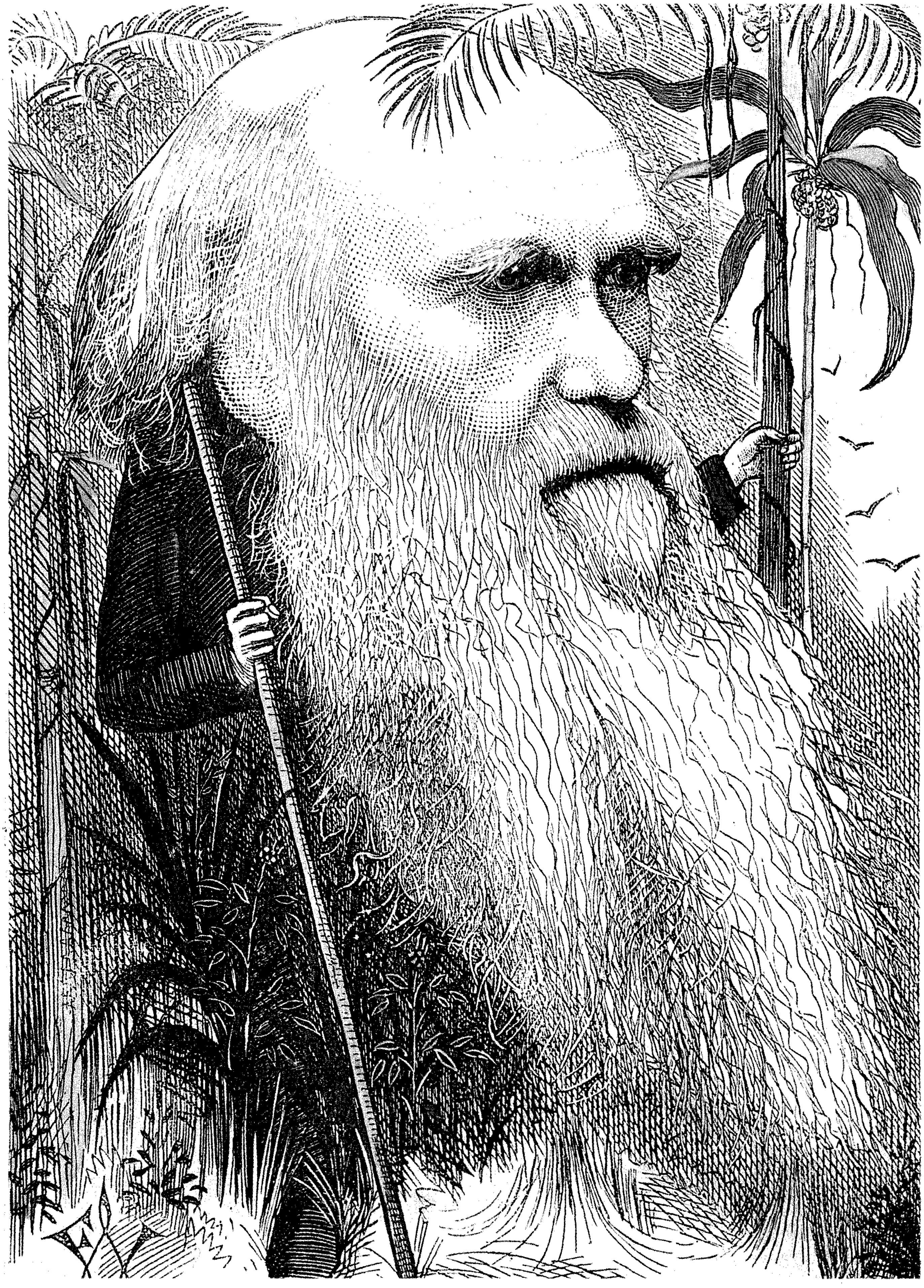
In a hotel lounge last summer, clutching a pink-orange courtesy drink, I listened to some gentlemen with yellow costumes and small guitars sing "Cielito Lindo." What on earth was I doing there? Our little group—mostly from the New York area, eighteen altogether—had gathered in Guayaquil, a dour industrial port city on the Ecuadorian coast. We were going to the Galápagos, in the Pacific, about six hundred miles to the west. The young Darwin had visited the islands in 1835, late in his epochal five-year voyage as naturalist aboard H.M.S. Beagle. He remained there for five weeks and collected impressions and specimens that eventually played a major role in his formulation of the theory of evolution by natural selection. The place has recently become a kind of eco-tourist Lourdes, visited by more than fifty thousand people a year. Sitting in the lounge, I wished with all my heart that I had not become one of them.

My fellow-travellers were lively, and giddy with anticipation, but I could barely say a word to them. Except for Mickey Cohen, the retired biology teacher and school administrator from Far Rockaway who organized the trip—an ebullient naturalist and born expedition leader—they seemed too nice by half. Nature lovers! They came with guidebooks and copies of Darwin stuffed in their backpacks and with enough diving equipment and cameras to remake all of Jacques Cousteau's underwater documentaries. One of them, a doctor's secretary, collected hermit crabs; she took them out at home, she said, and let them run all over her arms. Another, an observant former real-estate agent and teacher from New Jersey—the sharp-eyed Joan—knew the names of small plants and shrubs. She could spot *Chamaesyce*, a low, inconspicuous plant common to the islands, a mile away. She remembered the name. But how? It was beyond me, this cherishing of every dim bush and pebble.

Growing up in New York, I could never keep straight the names of trees and flowers. Early every spring, taking a bus across Central Park on some chilly afternoon, I would stare in bewildered rage at the demure appearance of color in the budded but still brownish sections of the park. Narcissus? Hyacinth? What was needed, I eventually came to believe, wasn't plants gussied up as classical deities, shedding metaphors like dead leaves, but the direct experience itself—the burn and shift of fine-grained sand at the glittering edge of some dry, unprepossessing island in the Caribbean.

Tamed, the country was a tolerable delight. A single patch of pleasant lawn—my mother-in-law's lawn in Westport would do—was all of nature. On either side, there were thick woods filled with willow, maple, oak, and tulip trees (so I am told). Sitting on the lawn with a book, I was accompanied by ants and bees, butterflies and dragonflies. Our city cats, transported to Connecticut, brought my wife and me pounded mice, sometimes leaving them in our bed. That was more than enough nature.

I was obviously not a good enough person to worship at the Galápagan shrine, consecrated as it was by lizards, giant tortoises, and small birds with



Which response did Darwin fear most for his revolutionary theories: rejection or the widespread acceptance of a remorseless view of life?

"To jailed comrades!"

• •

different-sized beaks. I had never longed to spend time among briny creatures or to swim with "friendly" sharks, and I blanked out on nature writing—the boilerplate of proudly unreadable monthly magazines—after a few paragraphs. And hadn't I seen that Galápagos documentary in fifth grade? I could almost hear the whirr of the projector, the tail end of the film slapping against the machine.

Anyway, there was an inescapable irony buried in the emergence of the Galápagos as shrine. Darwin, when he was there, had little idea of the significance of what he was looking at. He certainly did not think that he was searching for a general theory of the transmutation of species. In the Galápagos, he sat on the backs of giant tortoises and collected (rather negligently, he later admitted) some small birds. The revelations came only later, back home, when he submitted his specimens—the finches and other animals—to a variety of specialists. We tourists now followed in Darwin's footsteps all too knowingly. The Galápagos Islands may be a weird kind of paradise, but the eco-tourists, I thought, were bound to turn it into a conceptual Disneyland—the artificially preserved showplace of evolution. Re-creating anything like Darwin's innocent and hungry experience was impossible.

I had wanted to go to Salzburg, to the music festival, which I had visited at twenty, sleeping in immaculate student dorms and rushing to concerts in churches and small white-and-gold baroque palaces. My longing for Salzburg centered on an emblematic moment of happiness. Sitting in the little park behind the Mozarteum one afternoon, back in 1964, I heard a familiar voice pouring out of an open window: Elisabeth Schwarzkopf was rehearsing the song recital she was to give the next night. No one passing by seemed to recognize the voice or, if anyone did recognize it, to find anything unusual about the gift of a free concert. Now, in the midst of "Cielito Lindo," I tried to remember the sound of Schwarzkopf's voice and the magical calm in the park behind the Mozarteum.

It was my wife who had insisted on the Galápagos. She was writing a novel set in the islands. Anyway, she was one of *them*—a birder. Now and then, she rose from bed at 6 A.M. and headed off to mysterious wooded and sandy places in the outer boroughs. She had become a Darwin enthusiast, too, joining the increasingly large number of people who had recently come to take an interest in evolution. Just about everyone I knew, in fact, seemed to be reading about Darwin, arguing over him, boning up on his contemporary followers, and debating the implications of evolutionary theory. For a fair number of people, Darwinism appeared to be replacing Freudianism as an intellectual hobby, and even as a system of social analysis and an explanation of personal destiny. It almost seemed as if an enormous shift in consciousness and belief were under way, with evolutionary psychology replacing the "depth psychology" of the last hundred years.

A large general audience now followed the work of such interpreters and disputants as the biologists Ernst Mayr, Edward O. Wilson, and John Maynard Smith, the paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould, the zoologist Richard Dawkins, the philosopher Daniel C. Dennett, the science writers Robert Wright, Jonathan Weiner, and Matt Ridley, and the social scientist Frank Sulloway, all of whom have continued the discussion of fundamental issues initiated by Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Thomas Huxley. Would such writers soon establish themselves in intellectual households the way Carl Jung and Wilhelm Reich, Erich Fromm and Theodor Reik had done a generation or two ago—as icons and spiritual advisers? The prospect gave me the shudders. Robert Wright's 1994 book, "The Moral Animal," which summed up the emerging discipline of evolutionary psychology, proposed to find reasons in evolutionary history for virtually everything we do but our choice, in the morning, of gray socks or brown. Under such an assault, the tenets of humanism—such things as free will, culture, judgment—seemed to wither away.

No doubt an evolutionary psychologist would see in my agreeing to visit a place that gave me the creeps further evidence of the persistence of bourgeois marriage as a special kind of adaptive behavior in the contemporary environment. (They talk that way.) We had two children, and I no longer consciously desired to reproduce myself, but in Darwinian terms that hardly matters. The genetically patterned instinct to insure reproductive success, and thus to deliver the genes to the next generation, was an instinct that might lead another male to stray, but it led me, in the combined feminist and pro-marital environment of our little Manhattan social circle, to hang on to my wife. This may seem an odd way to talk about love, but Darwinians would say that even when planning vacations we act toward certain ends. Before we were married, I did not, like earlier courting males, wear plumage but instead followed the bird-watching Cathy Schine into mosquitoey Maine ponds. The way to that woman's heart was definitely through ponds, woods, and Roger Tory Peterson, whose impassive bird guides I examined with deep interest in our Southwest Harbor hotel. She knew, of course, that I was faking. In Darwinian terms, however, it was the thought that counted, and it worked.

IN the morning, our group left Guayaquil and flew to Baltra, in the center of the Galápagos archipelago. Baltra is flat, black-brown, and ugly. Darwin himself was apparently depressed by his first glimpse of the islands: he noted "stunted brushwood" and air with "a close and sultry feeling, like that from a stove," so that "we fancied even the bushes smelt unpleasantly." Within an hour, however, we tourists were sitting in a *panga* (a sort of motorized Ecuadorian rowboat) and heading out to our seagoing yacht, the Galápagos Adventure, anchored in the bay. The yacht was ninety feet long, the same length as the Beagle, and, at first sight, a great deal more comfortable. There was a gleaming wood-panelled lounge, with polished floors and brass rails, and at the front of the ship, facing the bow and the sea, an open deck that I knew I would love. That deck would be my retreat from the nature lovers.

Mickey, our tour leader, who was short, strong, and effervescent, with dark eyes that danced when he talked about nature—he was pushing seventy but had more energy than a teen-ager—revved everyone up. Not that the group needed it. Antic joking, a kind of nervous hilarity, swept through the fold. They were all amazed to be in the islands, cut off from everything—so far away from civilization, some of them said, that there could be a nuclear holocaust and we would never know it. Hearing this, I secretly suspected them of wanting the missiles to land; that way, they could stay in the islands forever, keeping company with the lizards, and never return to the impurities of civilization.

The cabins below smelled of fuel, so Cathy and I headed for the upper deck, where we found a cabin with windows and ocean air. An evolutionary theorist might have said it was our version of a niche. In the forest, the squirrels, avoiding the big cats and other predators, developed the ability to climb trees and escaped to the canopy. For us, too, higher up was better—or so we believed. Unfortunately, the cabin was so tiny that our knees knocked together as we sat on the facing beds. Two decks below, a generator roared twenty-four hours a day, and when the boat lay at anchor even our cabin hummed and vibrated like the No. 2 express between Times Square and Seventy-second Street. Despite the gleaming lounge, our voyage might not always be comfortable. Darwin, who suffered terribly from seasickness, at least did not have to smell gasoline or listen to a generator.

"I'm so excited," Cathy said. "Aren't you?"

"Oh, yes," I said.

WAS Darwin merely lucky? When I read "Voyaging," the marvellous first volume (published in 1995) of Janet Browne's ongoing biography of Darwin, I was struck, for a while, by the apparent contingency of Darwin's greatness—his frequent and dangerous flirtation, as a young man, with mediocrity or a merely eccentric monomania. How easily he could have become one of the entomologizing or botanizing gentlemen, the young men who stayed at home! Before the Beagle voyage, he had never thought of training himself as a professional scientist. After two years of medical school at the University of Edinburgh, he had fled in horror—shocked by the operations performed without anesthesia. He then enrolled at Cambridge, intending to take Holy Orders. Like many another Anglican clergyman, he would place rocks, feathers, and shells on the drawing-room table, the collection arrayed in celebration of God's glory. The clerical orthodoxy of the day was "natural theology"—the notion that the world's infinite but mutually dependent variety was proof of God's grand design.

Darwin wound up as naturalist of the Beagle mainly because the ship's captain feared going insane. Captain Robert Fitzroy was twenty-six—only four years older than Darwin and relatively untested. Though gifted in many ways, he was plagued by a high, nervous irritability, and when slighted he could flare up in uncontrolled rages. He was an aristocrat by birth and could not bear speaking to the crew, or even to the officers, as equals; he required the presence of a man from his own class with whom he could share dinner and conversation—a man interested, as he was, in the natural sciences. In 1831, the Beagle's new mission was to make chronometric measurements and to chart the coastal waters of Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego, and Chile; after leaving the Americas, the ship would then continue west, stopping at British settlements in the Pacific, the Indian Ocean, and South Africa. The solitude of those long voyages could be unbearable; the previous captain of the Beagle, falling to pieces off the dreary, alienating coast of Tierra del Fuego, had blown his brains out in his cabin. And there was suicide in Fitzroy's family, too. His uncle, Viscount Castlereagh, the British Foreign Secretary, had slit his own throat at his country estate in 1822. For both family and professional reasons, Fitzroy had good reason for concern.

Darwin, despite an undistinguished undergraduate career, had remained close to several of the dons he met at Cambridge, one of whom rallied support for him as a candidate. Darwin went to see Fitzroy in London. The two young men met, talked, and dined. Both of them were very direct, and they quickly hit it off, each charming the other, even though Fitzroy, an adherent of the popular "sciences" of phrenology and physiognomy, took some exception to Darwin's appearance. Darwin later wrote in his autobiography, "He doubted whether anyone with my nose"—it was rather blunt—"could possess sufficient energy and determination for the voyage."

If we think of Darwin at twenty-two, waiting in Plymouth for the Beagle to leave, we may find him alarmingly unprepared for the moral and intellectual adventures he was about to undergo. Though he was an experienced amateur naturalist, he had little knowledge of anatomy, and he couldn't draw. Perhaps his father's exasperated denunciation of him a few years earlier—"You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching"—still rang in his ears. In a panic before leaving, he taught himself navigation and relearned mathematics. Suddenly, his face broke out in a rash, and he began to suffer chest pains and heart palpitations. The junior officers taunted him with tall stories and incomprehensible nautical slang; he seemed a useless young swell. (During the voyage, on April Fool's Day one of the crew called out, "Darwin, did you ever see a Grampus?," causing the young naturalist to rush to the upper deck to catch a glimpse of the mysterious creature.)

When, after many delays, the Beagle finally put out to sea, on December 27, 1831, Darwin immediately became seasick. As he stretched himself out flat on the chart table set up in the poop cabin, or in the hammock slung above it, his nausea and dizziness intermingled with screams from the crew. Fitzroy, eager to assert his authority, often had the men flogged for one offense or another.

A young man unready for his destiny and cast among harsh strangers is a figure that appeals to us enormously, perhaps because so few of us ever feel quite prepared for the great events of our lives. But Darwin, whatever his ignorance, possessed something that most of us lack: an indiscriminate hunger for information and collecting—the very thing that led him to shove beetles and owl into his mouth. This kind of unformed curiosity—desire to see the Grampus—is usually accounted of little use to scientists, who need to define and limit their interests before serious research can begin. But it may have been the key to this young man's success.

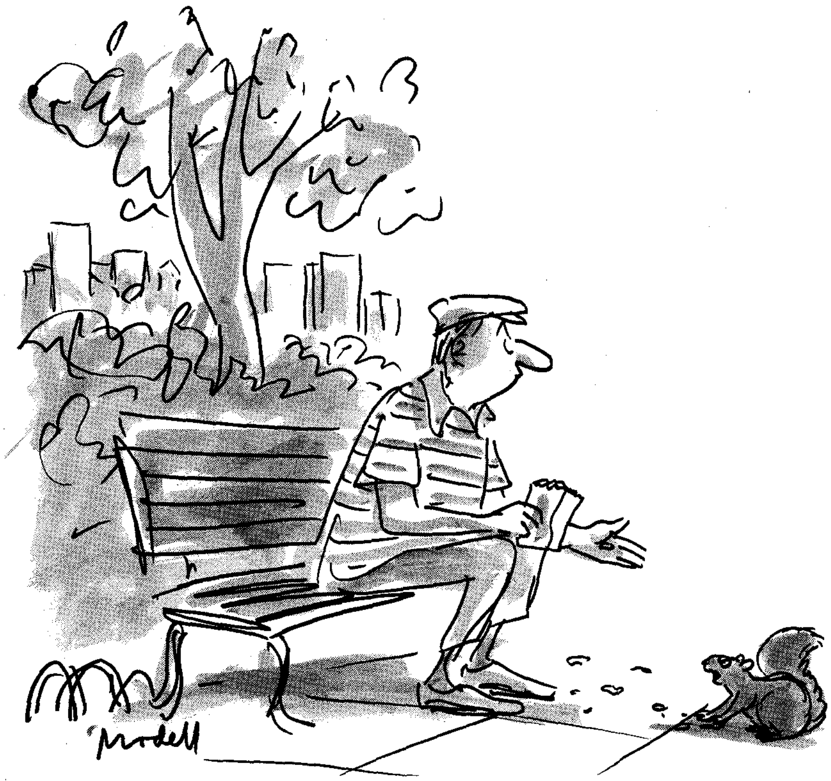
On board the Galápagos Adventure, our first dinner featured strange Ecuadorian vegetables—pale-yellow and whitish things. Afterward, standing against the windows in shorts, our Ecuadorian guide, Rodrigo Jacomé—Rod he called himself—gave us the lowdown A formidable ex-rancher from the Andes, he was about forty-five, handsome and rather tough-looking. He stood with his arms folded and gave the impression that he had been around. He knew the islands, he knew his Darwinian texts, he knew biology, and, teasing the women he seemed to know Americans, too. The return of the Latin lover, I thought grimly

Some of this stuff—the going-to-the-Galápagos litany—Mickey had drummed into us earlier. The islands are relatively new—none more than five million years old—and were formed by underwater volcanoes thrusting up as tectonic plates beneath the Pacific moved slowly over "hot spots" in the earth's mantle. The lava eventually broke the surface and cooled, leaving the black slopes of volcanic shields, with cratered and fissured rock, and long lava tubes running down the sides of the elevated sections. There are some grassy, and even semi-luxuriant highlands, green under a misty gray sky but despite a rainy season it doesn't rain much in the Galápagos, and most of the surfaces are hard and dry.

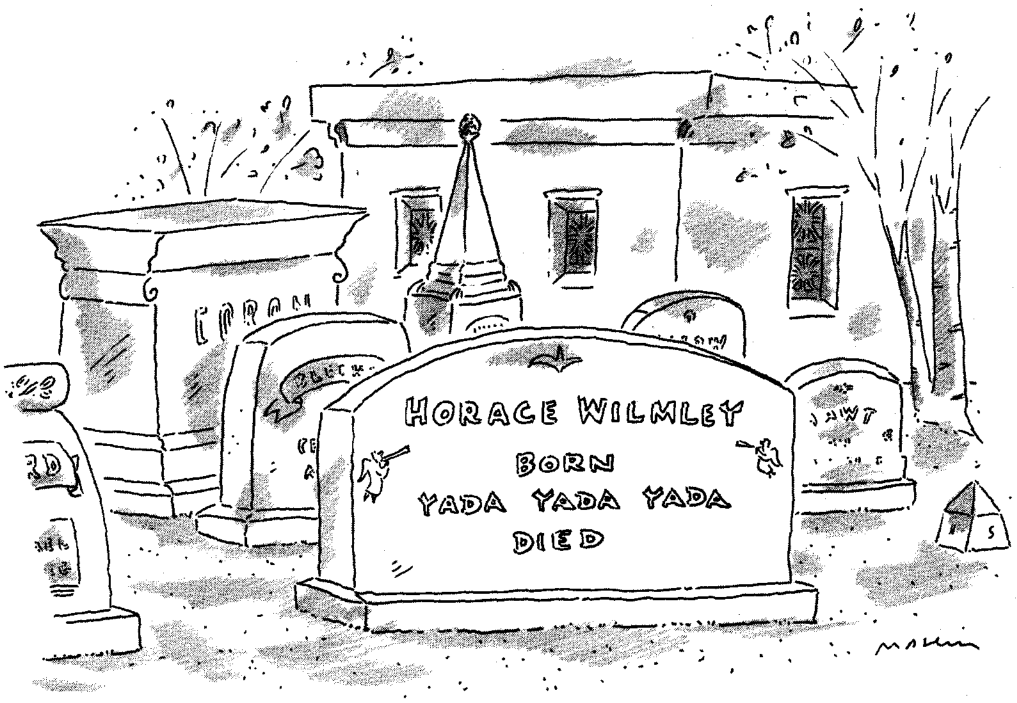
The animals crawled out of the sea borne to the islands on currents, or arrived from the South American mainland on driftwood, or, in the case of birds, flew. Many of them had to struggle to find food, but they suffered the intrusion of very few predators. When Darwin visited the islands, he was amazed to see birds easily killed by a switch, or even caught in a hat.

The defenseless animals have long been at risk, however. All through the trip, the Galápagos National Park Service people we met angrily recounted the depredations of the past. Starting in the sixteenth century, European visitors brought domestic dogs and cats, which turned feral and menaced the iguanas and they brought goats, which ate the vegetation that the giant tortoises depended on. British and American whalers later removed tortoises by the hundred, storing them upside down in the holds of their ships, so they would have fresh meat for the long voyages. As a result, some of the tortoise species, slow breeders, became extinct.

The islands now bristle with prohibitions. The Ecuadorian government licenses the tour boats; no vessel without such a license or a prohibitively expen-



"You know, of course, that these are legumes, not nuts."



ive temporary permit may legally cruise in the Galápagos. shore, we were not to wander ff alone or walk anywhere ex:ept on marked paths, and we vere not to touch or feed the nimals. Each time we returned o the Galápagos Adventure from ur explorations, the crew, standng on a steel ladder at the side f the yacht, would spray our egs and feet, washing off any inects, sand, seeds, or pollen. The mmaculate shrine, of course, vas not the ship but the islands: ve were not to bring anything rom one habitat to the other.

There was something a little riggish in the Galápagos cult—roduced, I thought, both by Ecadorian greed and tourist un:ase. The announced idea was to reserve Darwin's laboratory: we vould observe natural change by onsciously changing nothing. A nice aradox, but it inescapably led to another: the Ecuadorians couldn't really let ome fifty thousand people a year into he Galápagos without threatening the ery purity they wished to preserve. The co-tourist, inspired by virtue, feels like guilty tourist, and the guardians of the slands never let him forget it.

THE young Darwin may have shown few talents apart from a passion or shooting and collecting, but enthusiism counted for more in 1830 than it loes now. As Janet Browne makes clear, he distinction between amateur and rofessional—between the clergyman vith his feathers and ferns and the adanced scientist laboring over fossil renains and taxonomy—had not hardned, as it would later on. Nor had the cientific disciplines thrown up their valls. Setting out to sea, Darwin was ex:ited as much by geology and botany as e was by zoology and paleontology; he vas eager to study mountains, reefs, leserts, and plants as well as crustaceans nd birds. Living at a moment when science still had to depend on exploration nd adventure, he neither censored his uriosity nor limited his movements; it eems never to have occurred to him that here were some things he should not inestigate, some places he should not go.

The Beagle made its first stop at St. Jago São Tiago), in the Cape Verde Islands, off Africa, and Darwin was delivered into the rest of his life. He revelled in the tropical vegetation, ate bananas ("maukish & sweet with little flavor"), and rapidly developed ambitious theories about the geological history of the islands. He also played hide-and-seek with an octopus or a cuttlefish that kept changing its color:

> I was much amused by the various arts to escape detection used by one individual, which seemed fully aware that I was watching it. Remaining for a time motionless, it would then stealthily advance an inch or two, like a cat after a mouse; sometimes changing its colour: it thus proceeded, till having gained a deeper part, it darted away, leaving a dusky train of ink to hide the hole into which it had crawled.

This description was written in 1837, the year after Darwin returned to England, and was published in 1839 in his popular book "Journal of Researches into the Geology and Natural History of the Various Countries Visited by H.M.S. Beagle," or, as everyone now calls it, "The Voyage of the Beagle."

With a groan, I had begun the book in our cabin during our first night at sea. An entire volume of nature writing! The style was fluent but matter-of-fact. With a little help from Browne's biography, however, one can see the great blaze of energy behind Darwin's literary equanimity. In 1832, and in the following years of the voyage, Darwin explored and collected with furious concentration in Brazil, Argentina, Tierra del Fuego, and Chile. He was grateful to be on terra firma, where he could keep his food down, and, as Fitzroy and his men charted the waters and made their chronometric measurements, Darwin, alone or with crew members who had volunteered or whom he had press-ganged into service, went ashore—sometimes deep inland. He preserved and labelled his new specimens, then left them in barrels for the next Admiralty vessel to pick up and take home.

Insatiable for experience, he roamed the pampas in the company of polite but treacherous gauchos sporting shoulder-length hair and long knives in their belts. In Argentina, he had a solemn meeting with the fierce master horseman and killer General Juan Manuel de Rosas, who was intent on exterminating the Indians. (The young visitor apparently did not attempt to dissuade him.) In a sequel to the old adventures of the Glutton club, he feasted on odd creatures, including armadillo and what he took to be an ordinary ostrich. It was actually the uncollected species he'd heard about from the locals—later named *Rhea darwinii*—but he didn't realize what he had put in his mouth until the meal was half over.

After a couple of years spent nosing up and down the east coast of South America, Fitzroy and his men passed through the Strait of Magellan and moved up the west coast. Darwin's account grows more and more expansive. In Chile, he was close to an earthquake, which fired his imagination as only a catastrophe can. (He openly admits he enjoyed the disaster as spectacle.) He crossed the Andes, speculating about the growth of mountains, rode back to the coast, and rejoined the Beagle, which soon set out into the Pacific. He was heading for the Galápagos.

"The Voyage of the Beagle" was written to impress the scientific community in London, at the universities, and beyond; but, however stately Darwin's manner, he is unmistakably careering through Eden, naming the creatures as he goes. Against my will, I was beginning to admire his writing: the steady, evenhanded, respectful description of every living creature, every piece of terrain, and every natural event. The prose is quiet but also confident and brimming—a style produced not merely by scientific curiosity but by an intense happiness dissolved into the objects of its study. Fearing nothing, exaggerating nothing, Darwin reintroduced into English prose intimations of the marvellous. In Patagonia, a spider,

> while standing on the summit of a post, darted forth four or five threads from its spinners. These glittering in the sunshine, might be compared to rays of light; they were not, however, straight, but in undulations like a film of silk blown by the wind. They were more than a yard in length, and diverged in an ascending direction from the orifices. The spider then suddenly let go its hold, and was quickly borne out of sight.

The spider is an acrobat, a walker not on tightropes but undulations. In the Galápagos, the giant tortoises

> are absolutely deaf; certainly they do not overhear a person walking close behind them. I was always amused, when overtaking one of these great monsters as it was quietly pacing along, to see how suddenly, the instant I passed, it would draw in its head and legs, and uttering a deep hiss fall to the ground with a heavy sound, as if struck dead. I frequently got on their backs, and then, upon giving a few raps on the hinder part of the shell, they would rise up and walk away; but I found it very difficult to keep my balance.

On the contrary, his balance was superb. For all its gravitas, the book is a rapt tale of wonders.

WE arrived, early in the morning, at Santa Cruz Island and went ashore in the *panga*. I sat with my knees clenched together and with a life preserver around my shoulders. As the boat drew in, a lovely crescent beach appeared, white and immaculate, with red-spotted lava rocks at either end stretching into the sea. The stillness of the air was magnificent. Here was my glittering beach! Nature enough! And then we saw them, a Galápagos specialty: a procession of marine iguanas making its way up from the ocean. The large black lizards dragged their long tails through the sand; they were hideously ugly. But there was an oddity: I could see their legs moving, but from our distance, about thirty yards away, the group of bizarre creatures as a whole appeared stationary. A trick of perspective and distance? Pelicans came gliding in, flying very low, perhaps fifteen feet overhead, and they seemed enormous, with pouches the size of satchels. I suddenly realized that the sun was standing almost directly above us: we were virtually on the equator. Very quickly, I was spooked. Casting no shadow, I felt nailed to the spot, as bodiless as a post.

Disoriented, I looked a little more closely at the red spots on the lava rocks. Sally Lightfoot crabs, hundreds of them, a dark but still brilliant red, were clambering across the black. The crabs moved incessantly, climbing toward crests or edges, but, again, like the iguanas, they seemed never to get anywhere. What was I seeing? Motion without movement; agitation without destination. The rocks seemed infested, the scene incomprehensible. When I attempted to follow the progress of a single crab, I lost track of it, distracted by the many other creatures.

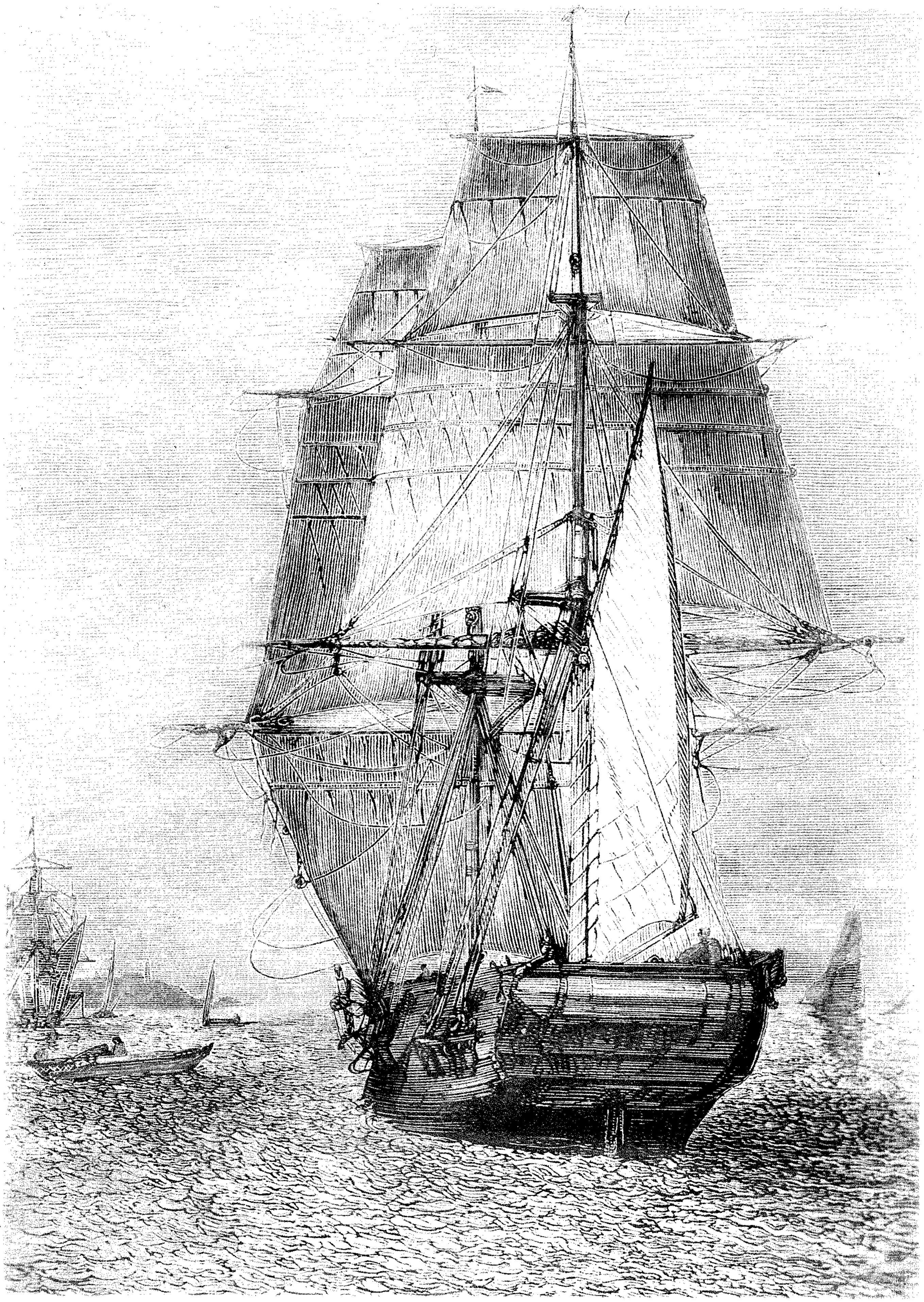
I gave it up as a bad job and joined the nature lovers, who were swimming in the ocean. The water was clear and very cold. Most of the group, including two widows in their sixties, wore wetsuits and used snorkelling equipment. But I have always been at a loss with gear, too myopic to see much through the mask, and often confused and panicky with mouthpiece and snorkel. So I swam along the rocks without equipment, and, as I moved, something in the water, secretly and below, brushed against me.

THE spider that Darwin studied in Patagonia, which bore itself away on gossamer threads, also spun connections and relations that reached to all of us, for evolution was a web, with everything connected to everything else. To the practiced eye, the spider's blindly reflexive behavior was also a virtual librar of adaptive traits refined through evolutionary practice—strategies that were n different in quality from adaptations tha primates had performed in their lon march to *Homo sapiens*.

It is a remorseless process. Does anyone—even the most confident atheist o materialist—really take comfort fro evolution by natural selection? Evolutio offers nothing (as the Victorians sorel complained) to the human desire fo ethical advancement or emotional solac The American philosopher Daniel C Dennett has candidly described Darwin' theory of natural selection as the "universal acid" that seems to burn away all ou comfortable illusions. For Dennett an other neo-Darwinians, not only is natural selection the center of biology but i explains more of consciousness and morality than most people realize. For ou choices and character, our desires an deeds may be the result of long-ago accidents and adaptive mechanisms, whic improved chances of reproductive succes in a given environment, and then go passed along in genes, after numberles generations, to you and me, where the function in a new environment, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. It is mindless as well as remorseless process—"algorithmic," Dennett calls it.

This genetic patterning, which starte with tiny microörganisms, is now extraordinarily complex, the things of thi world joined in systems of astoundin subtlety. Yet no centralized intelligenc planned the life around us. There is Design but no Designer: natural selectio wants nothing, aims at nothing, an reaches no resolution or fixed point. I the neo-Darwinists are right, our creativ ity, our consciousness—Elisabeth Schwarzkopf rehearsing Schubert near an ope window and someone listening outside—were produced by a process bot unconscious and uncreative.

Nor can evolution be thought of as progression. We can speak of expansion in the sense of greater complexity, bu not of progress. In particular, human beings are neither the inevitable goal no the end product of evolution: evolutio passes right through us. As Stephen Ja Gould maintains, our existence is merel contingent, the species *Homo sapien* no more than a tiny twig in the tre of life—a twig that might easily hav



Darwin joined the Beagle's expedition mainly because the ship's captain feared going insane from the solitude of the long voyage.

fallen dead. At his most relentless, Gould declares that "we came *this close* (put your thumb about a millimeter away from your index finger), thousands and thousands of times, to erasure by the veering of history down another sensible channel." By contrast, bacteria were here before us and will triumph after we are gone. Men and women will leave their bones but cast no shadow.

SEE. SEE?

See where the frog
under the grass bank sits—
Where I would sit
if I were afraid.

I came down to the lake
this morning, to get away
from the dish/spoon clash
of familiar, familial

loving. Frog sits
rocking on the round
chest of his breathing.
I've seen his black-and-green

eye, I've seen the light
make a wet spot in it.

And there's the tight gold
line of his underjaw,

there's his small large body.
The question: *Why don't you*
want to catch him? A new
answer: *Because he's scared.*

Out in the wet cool air, this
frog's cheeks shudder
like gills out of water.
And I am not yet perfect,

either. I am not yet
adult and whole.
I didn't keep myself from moving.
Too green. He had to leap.

—Elizabeth Macklin

As the Galápagos Adventure plowed ahead to the next island, I was sitting at night on the open deck in front of the dining room. Life stirred all around me, and I was caught between wonder and dismay. Something was snorting and blowing out in the dark water. Large birds—swallow-tailed gulls—flapped around the ship, even at night, and earlier in the day, when I was on my way back to the cabin to get some suntan lotion, I looked down at the water and saw a hammerhead shark swimming gracefully by. I had recovered from my disorientation on Santa Cruz, but I was not comfortable in the occasional Galápagos plenitude. Splashing into the surf at some handsome beach—the beaches, some composed of crushed lava, were white, dark green, even a chic, fashion-spread black—our group would pick its way through dozens of sea lions, the males lording it over their consorts and children and raising their heads to roar us away if we came too close. Rod roared back at them. "Beachmaster," one of the women said, with both amusement and respect, and I wasn't sure whether it was Rod or one of the bulls that she meant.

As we walked on the islands, Mickey and Rod seemed to be getting into a slight tug-of-war. Lively as a water bug, Mickey pointed out sights and animals and raced from rock to rock, flipping them over in search of scorpions. But then Rod would stop before some small plant and demand its name, and Mickey, struggling, would finally come out with the Latin designation; Rod, grinning, would offer a minor correction. Everyone sighed in appreciation. The women, I suspected, were caught between reverence for Mickey and attraction to the rugged and self-sufficient Rod. Competitive behavior between men! It is a staple of Darwinian psychology. Men are always competing in one way or another (or, alternatively, reassuring each other of their mutual status)—a hangover from days when men struggled to attract mates and fertile women were a precious resource. After a mere six thousand years or so of civilization, we are living in postindustrial societies, carrying genes developed during innumerable years of hunter-gatherer life. Sitting before computer screens, men swing clubs, hunt, kill, put on ceremonial dress. The downsized employee who runs amok is only the most overt among the confused and misbehaving. Maladaptation runs riot in the silicon-and-concrete jungle.

On the beach, perhaps a hundred of the sea lions lay in groups, with the bachelors, defeated in combat by the dominant males, having withdrawn to a little colony at one end, where they could nurse their wounds. Occasionally, one of the younger bulls, barking as it swayed forward, would make a premature challenge and get chased away. Pregnant cows moaned here and there; one cow, having just given birth, was still connected by an umbilical cord to her shiny black baby.

As I walked through the sea lions for the first time, I was disgusted by the oily, rolling, and roaring fecundity—a rank and greasy mass, like a vat of sunbaked Crisco. But I was probably the only one so affected. The others seemed to love the whiskered and rubber-necked sweetmeats. Several days into the trip, I was beginning to feel a little lonely: Cathy, searching for birds, had turned inland with her binoculars. It's not that the nature lovers were unfriendly. If one of our party faltered or got sick, they rushed forward silently with tissues, towels, little damp pads; they helped out, shared their gear. But there was something slightly impersonal about their manner which made me feel as if I were of no more than moderate creaturely interest. Of course, I had no right to complain; they only repaid my lack of interest in them.

Isolation was my own choice—or was it a choice determined long ago? Some male animals adopt the strategy of hanging back—for instance, the young bulls at the edges of the herds who refused to challenge the roaring beachmasters. They waited for the more aggressive males to exhaust themselves. They were not passive, exactly; they were wary and calculating. I had been a hanger-back my whole life, late to get started professionally, late to get married, slow to join group activities, late to discover Darwin. The hanger-back, timid but secretly ambitious and probably untrustworthy, was an observer, a spectator—by temperament, a writer. I looked again at one of the young bulls waiting on the sidelines. He was of moderate size, perhaps two hundred pounds, still wet from the ocean and therefore very dark brown, with melancholy eyes. The warm-blooded animal wanted a place in the sun.

For most species, isolation was intolerable. Sea lions, for instance, appreciated the company of other mammals. At the island of Bartolomé, I rode in late, after Cathy and the others had gone ashore (there was a second *panga* for the tardy), and I saw, moving in the water along the rocks, flashes of red, green, mauve, and yellow—a group of women, including my wife, swimming face down, with the help of colored flippers, snorkels, and masks. They were looking at the sharks, fishes, and rays below and were apparently unaware that three sea lions were swimming along beside them, leaping out of the water like dolphins, plunging and then leaping again. A kinship existed among those swimmers, and I felt a pang of jealousy. Was it a baby sea lion that had touched me in the ocean at Santa Cruz?

AT night, I lay in my bunk, half sea sick, trying to remember the archbishop's city in the Alps, its golden streets cleft by the river, and music pouring out of windows everywhere. Nature wasn't interesting, for God's sake! It was there for us to dwell in, steal from, protect against, learn from, and fear. As I shouted these things in my mind over the roar of the generators, I knew that I had resisted going to the Galápagos because I wanted to keep nature in its place. Growing up in the city, I had never thought of nature as a *subject*, like the history of baseball or constitutional law; it was the condition of our existence, and I hated its dominion over me. That human beings had descended from the apes was no longer difficult to accept. But the notion that human existence is a mere accident—that the glittering jewel, consciousness, is just another adaptive mechanism—was a vile blow to one's self-esteem.

And I hated the undermining power of Darwinian thinking. By what fortuitous adaptation had I survived the relentless struggle for existence? An evolutionary psychologist might say that "humanist" beliefs and aesthetic taste were elements of status-seeking behavior—and therefore a strategy for attracting mates and carrying on into the next generation. The cultivated self, individualism, taste, judgment: the way we get near to God is also the way we get laid. Maybe so, but, even considered in that crass light, how much longer would "taste" survive as an appeal in the current American environment? Celebrity—even buffoonery and shamelessness—was the new peacock tail. Maybe I was maladapted, too.

DARWIN was struck by the extreme, almost fantastic plainness of the Galápagos Islands and by the oddities of life and death there—the unwary birds, the ageless tortoises who finally died in such accidents as falling over a precipice. He may not have understood what he was seeing, but he was mightily tantalized by it. Here and there during his voyage, he may have had intimations of some larger pattern: the first two volumes of a new book that he read obsessively, Charles Lyell's "Principles of Geology," proposed a slow—rather than cataclysmic—formation of the earth's surface, and that notion later provoked Darwin into conceiving of the development of new species along similar lines. The islands were isolated from the rest of life. What did isolation and the struggle for existence in the Galápagos portend? Grabbing a marine iguana by the tail, he slung it again and again into its eating habitat, the ocean, only to watch it patiently crawl out every time. "Perhaps this singular piece of apparent stupidity may be accounted for by the circumstance, that this reptile has no enemy whatever on shore, whereas at sea it must often fall prey to the numerous sharks. Hence, probably urged by a fixed and hereditary instinct that the shore is its place of safety, whatever the emergency may be, it there takes refuge." In such a passage, one can sense the light of understanding beginning to flare. Writing the year after his return, in 1837, Darwin was very close to the central mechanisms of evolution.

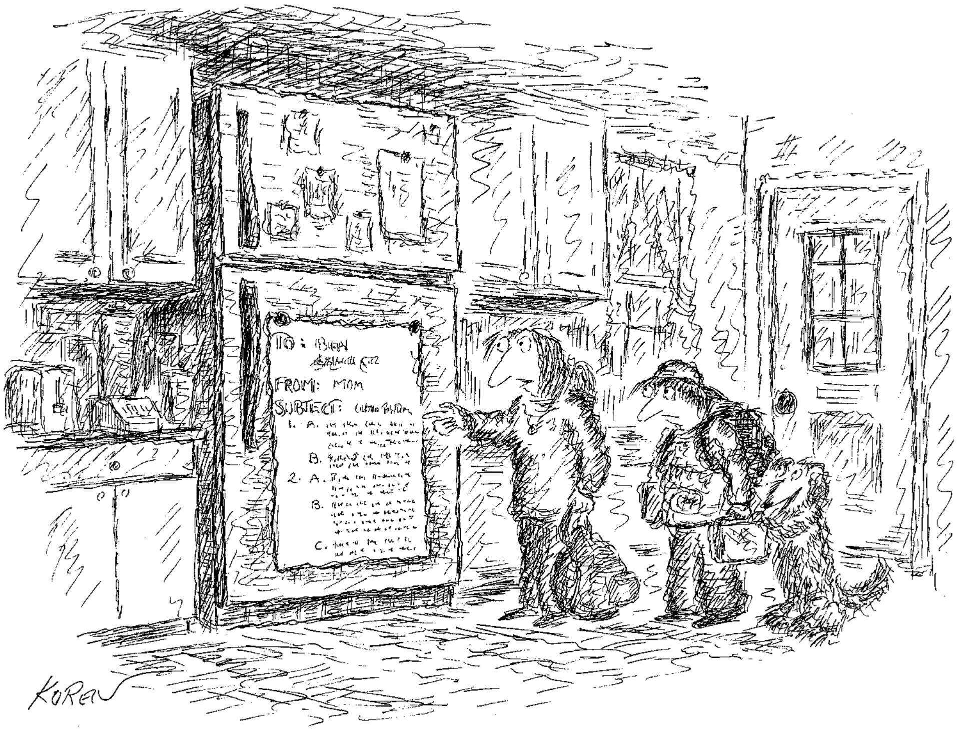
As I read "The Voyage of the Beagle" with greater and greater pleasure, I realized that Charles Darwin himself—a scientist who thought his own writing clumsy—was the nature writer I had unconsciously been looking for. When you fall under Darwin's spell, the famous anthology styles seem too ambitious by half: Chateaubriand impossibly ritzy and luxuriant; the vibrant Emerson spiritually possessive and vague; and Thoreau, in the awkward abruptness of his anger, a superb crank. Even Herman Melville, who visited the Galápagos in 1841 and wrote a little book about the islands, "The Encantadas," seems, by contrast with Darwin, overblown, literary in the worst way. Recording *his* first impressions, Melville saw "tumbled masses of blackish or greenish stuff like the dross of an iron-furnace, forming dark clefts and caves here and there, into which a ceaseless sea pours a fury of foam; overhanging them with a swirl of grey, haggard mist, amidst which sail screaming flights of unearthly birds heightening the dismal din. . . ."

Dear God, enough! Though Darwin "got" more out of nature than any man before him, he doesn't press too hard; he leaves nature alone. His words breathe relief, the relief of deliverance from the aesthetic and the spiritual. Nature is neither Chaos nor the Romantic imagination incarnate; it offers neither moral instruction nor divine confirmation nor the spectacle of artistic creation. Nature is but the material world, orderly in its general outline but furnished in its local detail with accident, chance, and blight. Darwin desanctified and de-aestheticized nature and delivered it to a new kind of literature—the writings of the evolutionary scientists and philosophers who now dominate our shelves.

DURING the nights, the Galápagos Adventure crossed the Pacific currents, and getting to sleep wasn't always easy. The boat swayed and plunged, and Cathy and I had it worse than the others; the higher up you are in a ship, the more violently you get tossed. We took Dramamine, and I swilled NyQuil, which tasted slightly like the sailor's sleeping potion, rum, and we plugged our ears to lessen the roar of the generators, and slept the way Mickey told us to, with one arm hooked around the thin mattress. (Holding on, I suddenly understood the function of Darwin's hammock above the chart table.) On my way to the head, I bruised my shins against the wooden drawers under the beds.

Some niche! The squirrels climbing to the canopy of the forest avoided the big cats only to fall prey to the hawks. Adaptation could play mean tricks: moving higher in the ship, we were more likely to become ill.

At breakfast, the others joked about seasickness, but complained only to



"Hey, look—Mom left us an internal memo."

• •

make fun of themselves for complaining; that was their style of irony, and by then I knew that it was really a form of pride, for, in fact, they didn't expect life to be comfortable. They believed in something else—hardihood, perhaps. Sharp-eyed Joan was hardy. So were the two widows, one of whom, pushing seventy, had legs like oak (she never tired when she was exploring the islands); she had nursed first one and then another husband through his final years.

I had badly underestimated them, and I now knew why. With a few exceptions they could not be called corporate, professional, or intellectual strivers in the style of the people we knew in New York. They had not put their greatest ambitions into work. Shrugging off my questions (I was eager to question them now), they spoke slightingly of their jobs. They were happy about *this*, the trip they take every year, sometimes to Iceland or to Costa Rica, or perhaps to the Great Barrier Reef or to the plains of Africa. The two widows had travelled all over the world; they had paddled through jungles and dived into the coldest seas. In their own way, these tourists were as hungry as Darwin.

Spurred by Darwin's writing, I had resolved not to hang back, and not to see nature as either a splendid or a deficient picture. My resolve was immediately put to the test at Tower Island, an extremely sinister place—as sinister as a horror movie, I couldn't help thinking. We sailed into Darwin Bay, which appeared to be a huge open horseshoe and was actually a partially eroded caldera, the crater of a volcano risen from the sea and open at one end. Around us on three sides, the guano-stained black lava cliffs (the walls of the volcano) rose straight up from the water for about fifty feet. We climbed Prince Philip's Steps, named in honor of His Royal Highness' visit in 1964. At the top of the steps was a drear, colorless plateau: leafless gray *palo santo* trees; tiny green-gray *Chamaesyce* plants; an atmosphere hot, breathless, and close, the air held around your head as if by a vise. Hundreds of birds—red- and blue-footed and masked boobies—surrounded us, many of them mating or tending young. Medieval saints preaching to birds perched on leafless trees must have tested their souls against such desolation. Quattrocentro visions of St. Francis irrepressibly came to mind. "Nature, no less than Life, is an imitation of Art. . . . Nature is no great mother who has borne us. She is our creation." It is Oscar Wilde's most famous paradox.

The masked boobies—large, so fishing birds—allowed one to wal right up to them. It is a strange experience: birds are normally skittish and one feels a queasy intimacy wit these fearless animals. When th masked boobies napped, heads tucke under wings, their white down looke like cotton, especially in the young But then Rod, enjoying the momen told us that, though the masked boobies generally have two babies at time, only one survives. In the circl of guano surrounding the nest, th firstborn, a little stronger by the tim the second is hatched, pushes th younger outside the circle, and th parents abandon the younger t predators or starvation. Rod told us is called "the circle of death."

The circle of death! It was to much, and I almost laughed. Nature Wilde might say, was imitating no art but kitsch. Darwin, however, tell us that nature just *is*. Neither Ol Masters nor Hitchcock's "The Birds should be used to see it any bette City boys, for all their impatienc with the natural world, were as prone t making metaphor out of nature as any one else. I had to stop, if only to clos the gap between myself and everythin around me.

Passing through the *palo santos*, w came out on a bluff overlooking th ocean, and horror faded away. Hundred of marine iguanas were crawling on th rocks, looking for a place to warm up and the sea lions, with heaven knows wha reserves of strength, pulled themselve out of the ocean as well, and flopped o the ridge with a groan.

My mood lifted. Something broke—a resistance, a fear, I didn't know wha Our little group stood in clumps, quietl watching the animals. Joan the sharp-eyed saw things no one else saw; Lind the hermit-crab lady, found one of he creatures and let it wander on her arm And Rod held forth. I had got *hi* wrong, too: it was nature, not female nature lovers, that interested him. Face with these people and the life and deatl of these creatures, I knew I could not remain aloof much longer.

A couple of days later, I was sitting o the foredeck again, the wide Pacific al around, and I had fallen asleep. I wok up and tried to read Darwin, but th page was fluttering with shadows.

flock of great frigate birds, perhaps a dozen in all, were flying just overhead, even lower than the pelicans on the beach at Santa Cruz. Viewed from underneath, the frigates, with their thin black wings, sharply angled at the joint—a spread of five feet or more—looked like paper cutouts or silhouettes, frightening in their flat blackness. They had gauged their speed exactly to match the ship's, and, even as they moved, no more than ten feet overhead, they appeared to be going nowhere at all. Movement within stasis: it was the iguanas crawling in the sand and the Sally Lightfoots on the lava rocks all over again. But this time I saw my mistake.

There were so many of them that they came close to blocking out the light, and suddenly, on the oddly darkened and fluttering deck, I felt again a kind of release, only much stronger this time. The frigate birds were scary and strange, yet they seemed to lift me off the deck with their wings. Fear, disgust slipped away; I felt a small tingling on the back of my neck and a great lightness. What was it? A feathered and airborne out-of-body experience? A longing to join something I feared, the way a man who hates some tune wakes up hearing it in his head?

I'm not sure what caused it, but my flight was the one moment of sheer exhilaration on the trip, and when I came down I knew that I had been more than wrong. Viewing nature as something composed and static was a way of pretending I didn't belong to it. Like it or not, I was part of the ceaseless flux, which induces crabs, spiders, sea lions, frigate birds, and eco-tourists, all equals in nature, to jostle for food and space, competing and coöperating at the same time.

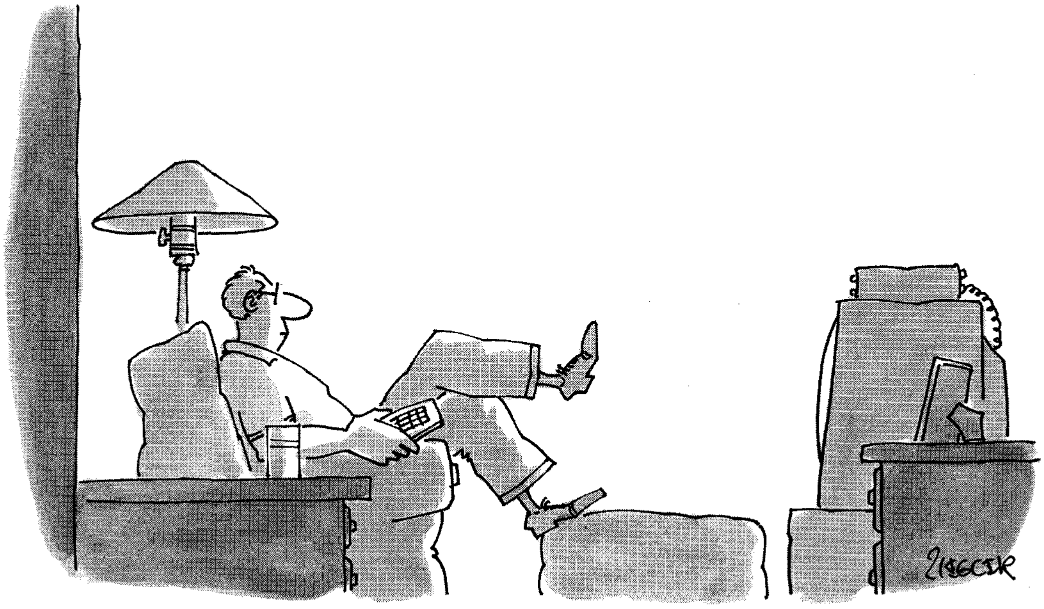
In the last couple of days, I had stopped fighting against everything and had begun to enjoy myself—at least a little. On James Island, I had knelt for a long time before a land iguana perched on a rock, gazing directly into the lizard's face, and studying its strange lips, which seemed to offer a welcoming smile. On my knees, I decided that anthropomorphism was the most forgivable of human errors. Terrified men and women were looking for proof that human existence was more than arbitrary—that there were some signs of the human in other creatures. However mistaken, we would settle for a smile. Reconciliation with "lowly" creatures was the first step in accepting the contingency of human life. After all, the rest of *them* were the result of accidents, too.

Darwin, who puts us squarely within the ceaseless flux, didn't, as a writer, *want* anything; that's why he's so moving. In this lovely early book, reconciliation with nature took the form for him of merely recording in his plain, friendly, copious sentences what he saw. Since his curiosity took in everything, that was no modest aim. But its expression was modest. The people on our trip shared Darwin's freedom from commonplace egotism and obsessive self-consciousness. They were stubborn people—mild, perhaps, but stubborn, and restless in the workaday world. Swimming among sea lions and sharks was their protest against the banality of American life.

Our trip was not ignoble. The giggling complicity of the first night, which I had taken as a sign of embarrassment about eco-tourism, was actually a burst of pure excitement. What it meant was this: how small our adventure is—and how much even that smallness is to be prized!

Chastened, and almost happy, I was ready to face the end. On our last day, we were able to look at an evolutionary casualty—Lonesome George, the last of the giant tortoise subspecies *Geochelone elephantopus abingdoni*. Though George was born on Pinta Island, he has lived since 1972 in the Charles Darwin Research Station, in Santa Cruz, a facility that (among other things) raises little tortoises of threatened species until they are strong enough to be sent home to their own islands. The baby tortoises were bunched in pens; George lived nearby, in a separate, gardenlike enclosure. Over the last quarter century, many attempts had been made to mate him with one female or another from a closely related subspecies, in the forlorn hope that he could then mate with his daughters. Still youthful by tortoise standards—he's estimated to be fifty or sixty—George could apparently attain arousal with his potential mates but not ejaculation, a poignant condition indeed. From a platform stationed above, we saw him in his garden, a melancholy monster who will probably carry his genes to the earth.

Watching George, and then the baby tortoises slowly moving in their pen, I made my peace with eco-tourism and the Galápagos cult. What the researchers, rangers, and eco-tourists were doing was partly a contradiction: natural selection, after all, had always condemned species to death. If we look back at the earth's history, there are many more dead species than living ones. Ecological ardor commands that we let no species die before its time, and no doubt there are serious arguments beyond sen-



"The following program is rated P, for 'poop.' "

timent for keeping George alive—the possibility of future adaptive behavior, say, that would allow a threatened species to sustain itself. Still, why grieve over the death of a subspecies? Extinction was necessary to evolution. One possible answer is that Rod and the others tried to keep George's paternity alive because the effort in some way kept *us* alive. Human beings did not necessarily stand any greater chance of surviving than had the innumerable species that vanished in the past. In the extinction of any species there was not just a sign but a guarantee of our own mortality. With hope against hope, one rooted for George to crash the cymbals a few more times.

AT home, in New York, the books on Darwin have flowed over the tables, the desks and chairs. In my little son's room, a couple of newly acquired hermit crabs live safely in an old aquarium. Cathy has decorated it pleasantly with rocks, plants, and sand, an artificial environment of damp, beachy life. The cats, always hungry, paw at the glass sides of the enclosure. They will not get in.

Darwinian controversies rage on. An ironic tribute to Darwin's continued power is the resistance to him among ideologues of the left and the right—including neoconservatives like Irving Kristol, who worry that acceptance of Darwinism will dissolve the social cement of organized religion, and members of the academic left, who worry that it bolsters "essentialist" notions of gender and human nature. But they are, among their intellectual peers, an increasingly beleaguered minority. The Pope himself has made his peace with evolutionary theory, and even progressive feminists like Barbara Ehrenreich—in her recent book "Blood Rites"—have been exploiting it. Indeed, the most ferocious and intellectually substantive debates these days are taking place *within* Darwinian theory. Thus, for instance, Stephen Jay Gould squares off against Daniel Dennett and Richard Dawkins, accusing them of exaggerating the role of adaptation in evolution. Even in the dust of combat, Darwin's triumph is secure.

My personal unease had diminished: wasn't culture, too, an artifact of our natural history? Richard Dawkins even coined the term "meme" to suggest that an idea or pattern—jokes, riddles, the four-note motto theme of Beethoven's Fifth—could be passed along from human to human, and also from generation to generation in a way analogous to the inheritance of genes. Consciousness was created by a long series of accidents and adaptations, but then consciousness served as a nourishing environment in which memes could replicate themselves. Human behavior and human culture, coöperative as well as competitive enterprise, are part of our creaturely inheritance. Placed back in her rehearsal room before an open window, the soprano would sing again, but for a future listener, sitting in the garden alone and enthralled.

WHEN Darwin returned home, an amazing thing happened to him: he became a rather dull person. For all his energy and physical courage, once he got back to England he sank, with an audible sigh of relief, into willed respect for convention and society. By 1842, he had virtually withdrawn from public life. He left London and moved into a big ugly house in Kent. Often ill, he surrounded himself with wife, children, pigeons, barnacles; the house was a burrow, a laboratory, a sickroom. Just as indiscriminate appetite was the secret of his youth, stolidity may have been the secret of his middle age. (The excitable Fitzroy, like the Beagle captain before him, did, in the end, commit suicide, at the age of fifty-nine, in 1865.) Step by step, with immense caution, Darwin developed his alarming and revolutionary theories, not publishing "On the Origin of Species" until 1859, more than twenty years after his return. One wonders which response he feared more. Was it rejection or—much more horrible—acceptance: the widespread acceptance of a remorseless view of life?

Without intending anything of the sort, he has confounded and taunted the rest of us, for Darwinian theory, by common consent, is the greatest of all assaults upon the human ego. Egoless we could never be, but even the city boy, living far from nature, must acknowledge his instruction by the immense reach of Darwin's modesty. Darwin had eaten the owl and tasted the acrid beetle. Whether we want to or not, we have to savor, and even digest, what he dared to put in his mouth. ♦

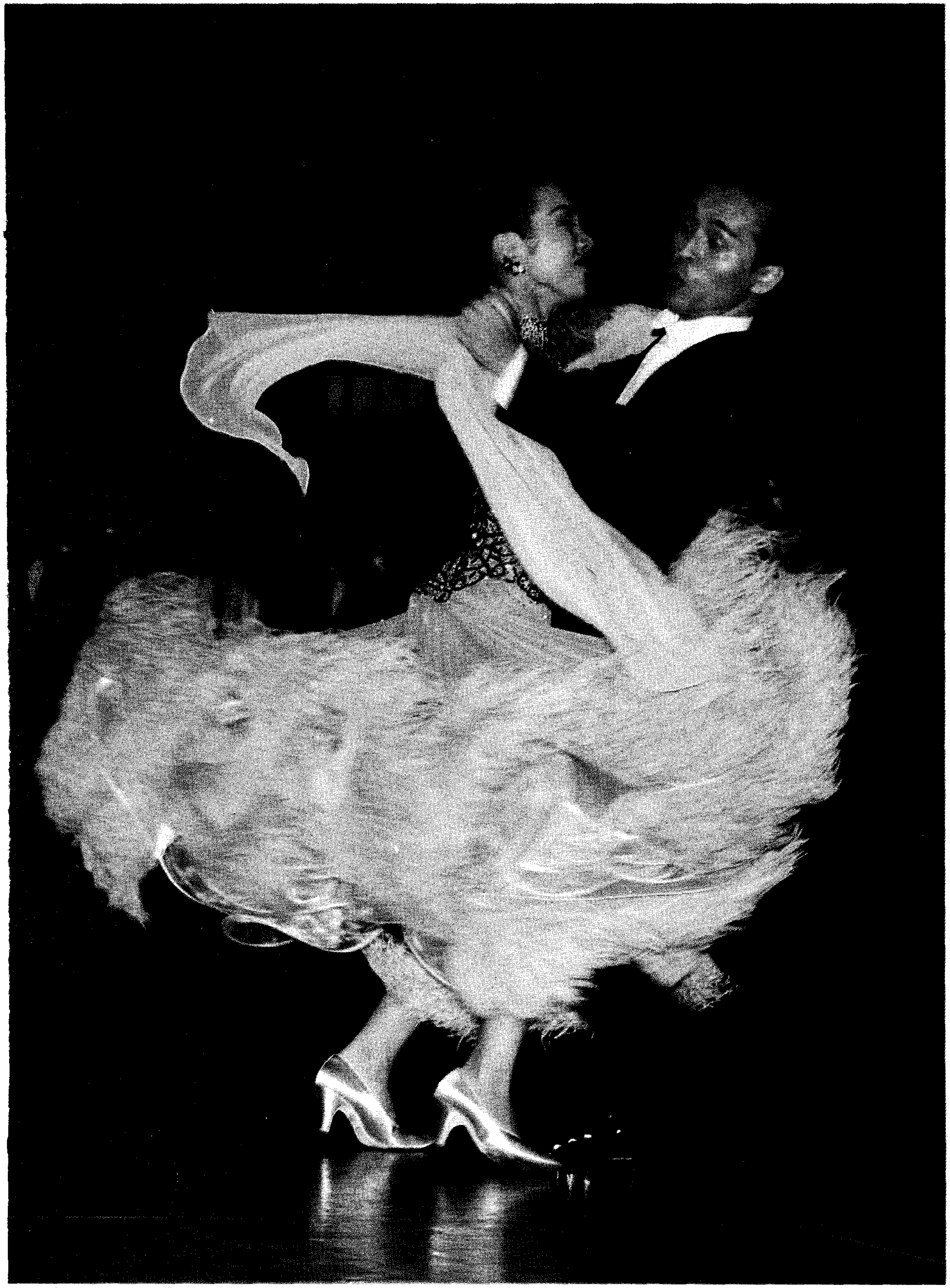
SHOWCASE BY TONY UCHIDA

EASTERN SWING

AT first glance, the couple in thi photograph appear to be involved in a pleasant and entirely harmless activity. Wrong. The belong to one of the most threatene minorities in any modern society. Harried by spouses, vilified by colleague these unsung men and women continu bravely to meet in secret, after dark, i quiet little halls, like heroes of the Frenc Resistance. They are Japanese ballroo dancers.

And now, for the first time, the story can be told. The Japanese filmmaker Masayuki Suo has written an directed an implausibly charming comedy entitled "Shall We Dance?" Whe the same question was used for the titl of a Fred Astaire and Ginger Roge picture in 1937, and when Debora Kerr put it to Yul Brynner in "The Kin and I," it was purely rhetorical: of cours they would dance. But Suo's movi shows a world in which the answer t such an inquiry is more likely to be "A you kidding?" The main character, middle-aged businessman called Shoh Sugiyama (Koji Yakusho), leads a life flawless regularity until, one night, ridin home on the train, he sees a youn woman standing at a high window. H tracks her down and discovers that sh is a dance teacher, and so, undaunted b the fact that his feet are at war with eac other, he learns to dance.

Knowing nothing of this craze, h wife fears the worst. She sniffs his clothing for perfume and hires a detectiv when the truth emerges, she is distraught. "Even if it was dancing, it wa still an affair," she says to her husban "It wasn't just an affair," Sugiyama replies. "I was seriously involved." Th film may lag a little, but its emotion tug is sure; unlike the Australian hero of "Strictly Ballroom," whose waltzing was barely more flamboyant tha the surrounding culture, Sugiyama ha to break the habits of a lifetime. Sinc the movie came out, other Japanes have followed in his footsteps, and n wonder: what could be more ecstati than to find, against all the odds, tha you got rhythm? —ANTHONY LAN



Sam and Nari Kaiho, semifinalists at the Japan Open International last October in Tokyo.

FICTION

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME ON MY HOLIDAY

A child moves closer to an understanding of death.

BY MARTIN AMIS

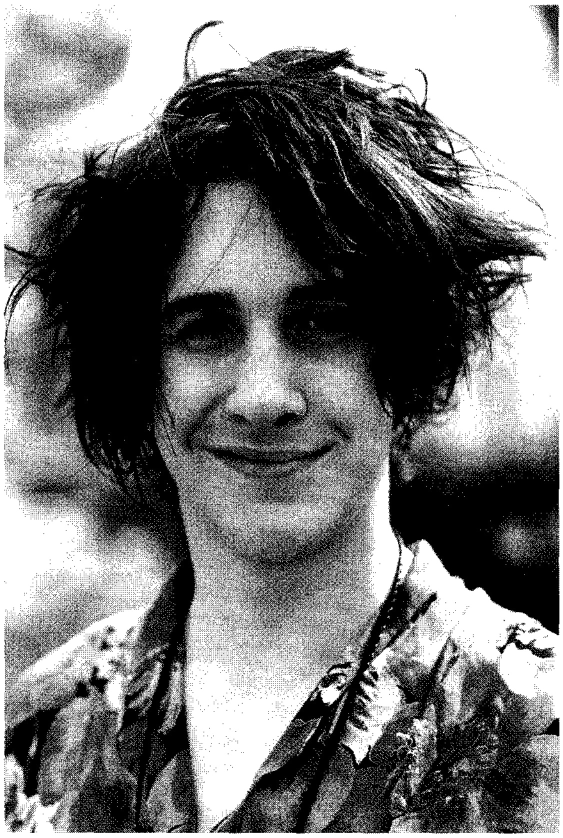
(FOR ELIAS FAWCETT, 1978-96)

A DERRIBLE thing habbened do me on my haliday. A derrible thing, and a bermanend thing. Id won'd be the zame, ever again.

Bud the virzd thing to zay is: don'd banig! I'm nad zuvvering vram brain damage—or vram adenoids. And I gan wride bedder than thiz when I wand do. Bud I *don'd* wand do. Nad vor now. Led me egsblain.

I am halve English and halve Amerigan. My mum is Amerigan and my dad is English. I go do zgool in London and my bronunziation is English—grizb, glear, even vaindly Agzonian, the zame as my dad's. Amerigans avden zeem zurbrised do hear an eleven-year-old who zbeegs as I zbeeg. Grandaddy Jag, who is Amerigan, admids thad he vinds id unganny. As iv suj an agzend requires grade ganzendration even vram grownubs, led alone jildren. Amerigans zeem to zuzbegd thad the English relags and zbeeg Amerigan behind glozed doors. Shouding oud, on their redurn, "Honey, I'm home!" My other grandvather veld divverendly: English, do him, was the more najural voize. Zo thiz zdory is vor them, doo, as well as vor Eliaz. I dell id thiz way—in zargazdig Ameriganese—begaz I don'd wand id do be glear: do be all grizb and glear. There is thiz zdrange resizdanze. There is thiz zdrange resizdanze.

ME and my younger brother Jagob usually zbend the early bard of the zummer in Gabe Gad, with my mum, and the lader bard in Eazd Hambdon, with my dad. Bud thiz year we wend do my dad's a liddle zooner than blanned. When the day game we gad ub ad the grag of dawn and biled indo the gar with our Ungle Desmond. Id was a vive-hour drive do New Yorg, bud the drawig wasn't heavy and Desmond doled uz many inderezding things—aboud dreams, aboud aldered



Elias Fawcett in London, May 3, 1996.

zdades. We zeemed to be there in no dime. My dad was wading on Ninedyzigzth Zdreed.

We grabbed zum lunj and then went oud to Lang Island in a big goach galled the Jidney. In the Jidney, you veld you were in a blane, nad a buz: vree orange juize or Berrier, vree beanudz, individual zbadlighds to read by, and a lavadory in the bag. We zoon zeddled indo my dad's rended houze in the woods. Nothing fanzy: in vagd, id good have been Oglahoma, with a big-ub drug in the driveway, an old gar zeed on the borj, and the neighbors always guarrelling and grying out—"Ged ub, Margared!" on one zide, and "Why, Garen, why?" on the other. Bud id did have the usual burzding revrigerador and muldible bathrooms, bluz gable DV. Zo: zum zdoo and bazda, zum "Beaviz and Buddhead," then ub the wooden hills to Bedvordshire. . . . My dad, doo, was very ubzed aboud Eliaz. And Isabel was alzo there, and alzo ubzed—and alzo big with jiled.

AS I zed, we wend do my dad's a liddle earlier than blanned this year, journeying down vram the Gabe do Lang Island.

Nearly every zummer, on Gabe Gad, Mr. Marlowe Vawzedd gums to bay uz a visid. Bragdigally a grownub now, Marlowe uzed to have a jab as a gounzellor ad a boys' gamb, and zo he is an egsberd ad guezzing whad boys wand do do. He is underzdandably babular with Jagob and me. Bud, well, Marlowe had do go home early thiz year. And my mum had do go home early thiz year. Begaz of whad habbened, bag in London.

Id was a dull day when Marlowe heard the news aboud his younger brother. The news aboud Eliaz Jagob and I wend with him ub the dird road—do where we barg the gar Over Horzeleej Band there zwam a gloud of gray: nad mizd, nad vag, bud the gray haze of ziddies, and of zdreeds. Ub vram the band id vloaded, lingering, drabbed in the drees, and nothing was glear. Dreamily Marlowe gad indo the gar and glozed the door. He wend do Bravinzedown Airbord. Virzd the liddle blane, do Bazdon. Then the bigger blane, do London Down And my mum zoon vallowed. Zo, as I zed, we wend do my dad's a liddle earlier than blanned.

MY younger brother Jagob is dodally obzezzed by durdles, dordoizes, vrags, doads, labzders, grabs, and all zords of zlimy and weird-shabed rebdiles, amvibians, and gruzdaceans. He knows all their Ladin names, all their baddernings, all their habidads. He's an egsberd on these greejures. And zo am I, whether or nad I wand do be. Begaz Jagob's giving me an earvul more or les round the glag.

Zo on many days, in Eazd Hambdon, we wend on grabbing egsbeditions. The bay zeemed do voam with grabs and with zbrads (minnows, diddlers). I used a drawl ned, vor the zbrads, and on my virzd zweeb I gad loads. With the grabs, you aggumulade them in a big bad. And ad the end of the day you have a grab raze. You draw a zirgle in the zand: the virzd grab to glear id is then broglaimed the winner. No grabs die: you jug them all bag indo the zee. Ad our vavoride bay, whij we galled Dead Man's Landing, there was alzo a van thad showed ub every hour or zo and zold lallibabs and ize gream.

On these grabbing dribs we would avden bring along my liddle "guzzen" Bablo. Bablo is only vour years old and you have do be very garevul with him when he goes in the zee. Begaz he gan only zwim with whad he galls his "armies" or his "vloadies." Bablo has a liddle zizder named IJ, who is alzo very gude.

One day Jagob gabjured a giand grab and game running ub the beej do drab id in the bad—the blazdig bad or medal gandainer in whij all the grabs were zdored. I was zidding on a towel, reading my boog: "Brando," by Elmore Leonard. Jagob ran bag down the zand. And then Bablo game ub do me and zed, "I've vound a grab, doo."

"Yeah," I zed. "Bud thad one's dead, Bab."

"Shall I drab id in the bad with the others?"

I zed, "Thad zdiv? Why would we wand thad in the bad? No, Bablo."

And he zed, "Why nad? Is id doo big?"

"Id isn't doo *big*, zdubid. Id's *dead*."

And id *was* dead—big dime. Halve Ids baddy had radded of. A zingle binzer dangled from a length of vrayed dendon. Id didn'd even zmell: thad's how dead that grab was.

"Gan I drab id in the bad with the others?"

"Devinidely nad. Zdab thiz, Bablo. No."

Juzd then Jagob gried oud vram the shore. A new dizgovery.

We wend do jeg id oud. Beyand the beer, the shallows were liddered with dozens of dead zbrads—brabably vishermen's baid. Bablo baddled in do inzbegd them. And game bag with a dead zbrad.

Zo we had our vinal zwims—Bablo blaying with his invladable sharg, and wearing his invladable "armies." And when the dime game vor uz do hid the road, Bablo revuzed do leave the zbrad behind. He zed he wanded to bring id home and inzdall id in a bags in his room. The zbrad would be his bed—inzded of a dag or a gad!

In the gar I zed, "Well, Bab, thad zbrad'll be a nize air-vreshener vor your room."

And he zed, "Why?"

"Why? Begaz briddy zoon id'll begin to reeg of dead vish."

"I don'd mind."

"Why nad?"

"Begaz I'll rub zum gream on id."

"Oh yeah? Whad zord of gream, Bablo?"

". . . Vish gream."

We all had a good jordle ad thad. And I zed, "Whad aboud rads, Bab? Whad iv a rad shows ub in the nide?"

"I don'd mind."

"Why nad?"

"I won'd zmell the rad."

"Why nad?"

"Begaz of the vish gream."

More jordling.

"Why don'd you bab bag to Dead Man's Landing, Bablo—for the dead grab. Id'll be a bal vor your vish."

Bud my dad zed thad Bablo already had his blade vull—virzd with the vish, then with the rad.

When we gad do his blaze, Bablo indroduzed his mum do the new bed: "Thiz is my vish. Id's zilver. Id's zmall. Id's dead. Id gums vram the zee. Id lives in thiz bags."

As iv the vish being dead was juzd another thing aboud id—juzd another of ids addribudes. Bablo's mum zeemed var vram enthusiazdig. Bud when we voned the vallowing morning, vor an ubdade, Bablo zed his vish was abzoludely vine.

WHEN Bablo was only three his mum made him a lion oudvid, vor Halloween. He dried id on, gave a vull-throaded roar, and growled, "I'm a lion gazdume!"

My dad galls these vunny zlibs of Bablo's "gadegory errors." One dime thiz zummer Bab and I were dizguzzing gars and driving, and I zed, "Your dad, is he a good driver, then?"

Bablo nadded with his eyes glozed. "Babba?" he reblied, in a voice both ganvident and ganvidenjal. "Babba gan drive all the way to the *ziddy*."

And he gave another nad, for emvaziz, as iv do zay, "Bood thad in your bibe and zmogue id."

Zo I juzd zed, "Is thad zo? *My* dad gan only mague id as var as Wainzgadd. Then he bulls over and they have to helb him oud of the gar."

Bablo zeemed ready do gredid id.

"And how's the vish, Bab?"

"Vine."

"Zdill going zdrang?"

"Yez," he zed. "My vish is vine."

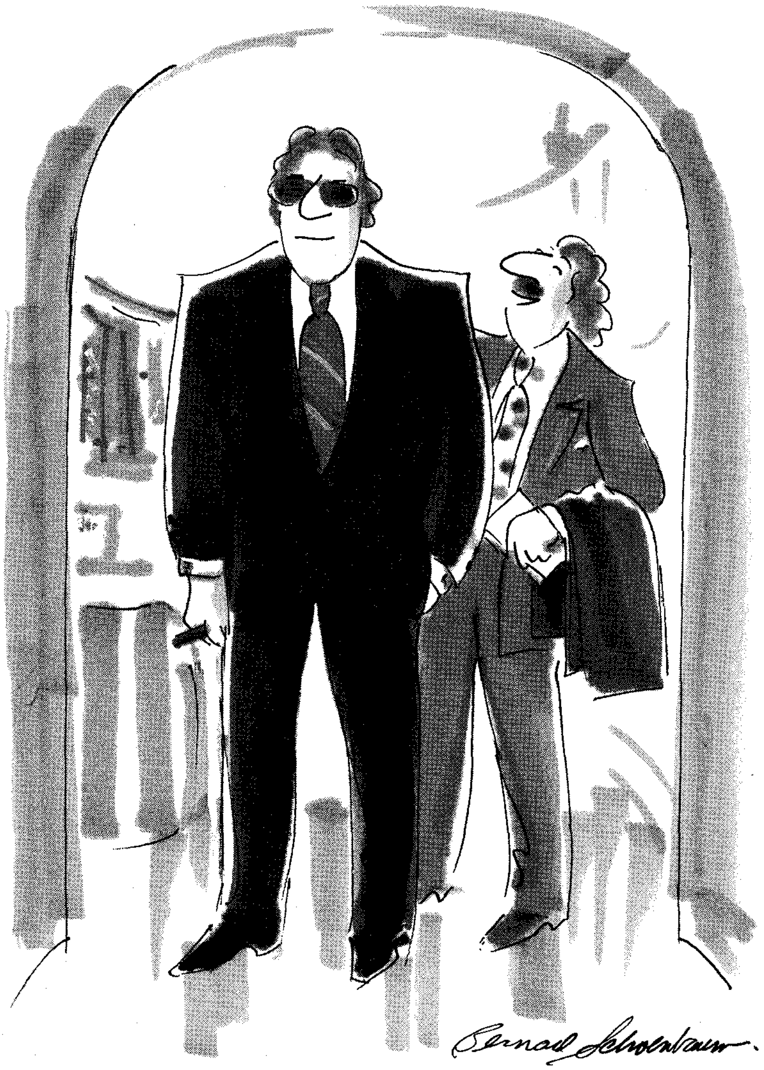
GLEARLY, Bablo does nad yed underzdand whad death is.

Bud who does?

Death was muj on my mind in the zummer—muj on my mind. Begaz of Eliaz. Eliaz died, in London Down. And zo death has been muj on my mind.

My dad zed thad early in the zummer Eliaz game round do his vlad. He game round do big ub a jagged—bud the jagged was in my dad's gar, and the gar was elzewhere, having ids baddery vigsed, edzedera, edzedera. Dybigal Eliaz—jazing a jagged agrazz down. Zo he hung around vor the whole avdernoon, blaying the binball machine and, of gorze, the elegdrig guidar. And my dad zed thad his memory of him was really vresh: his memory of Eliaz, or Vabian, whij was his nigname, remained really vresh. Isabel alzo ran indo him during the early zummer, in a doob drain, on the Zendral Line, under London and ids zdreeds. Dybigal Eliaz, with all his bags and bundles, his jaggeds and hads, gayadig, vezdive, brezzed vor dime—and zdill darrying vor a halve-hour jad. Zo the memory is vresh. And my memory is vresh. Bud is id zo vresh zimbly begaz Eliaz was zo young—zo vresh himzelve? My dad doled me thad he zenses the ghozd of Eliaz in his room, ad dawn, wading ad the end of the bed. I zee him at nide. A young ragzdar with vlyaway hair and gleeg lighds all around.

I alzo remember the day we heard the news, on Gabe Gad. How Jagob and I wend with Marlowe ub the dird road do the gar. And the gloud over the



"Just in. Tommy Lee Jones black."

• •

band, with ids urban gray—the gray of Daddenham Gord Road, of Jarng Graz Road, the gray of Goodge Zdreed. The zgy was gray and nothing was glear.

IN the vinal weeg of the haliday we had an inzidend. An inzidend where death, again, vleedingly showed ids vaze.

Id veadured Bablo. And another gadegory error.

We were all zwimming in the bool thad belongs to Alegs and Bam. Muj agdividy there, begaz they alzo have a dramboline: you ged all had, jumbing, then you leab indo the bool and gool down. Bablo was zwimming with his armies—his vloadies. Me and Jagob were mezzing around, blaying duj or Margo Bolo. My dad was on a lounger, having a zigaredde and jadding with Bam. And zuddenly Bablo game oud of nowhere and zbrang indo the bool—withoud his vloadies. Bablo had vorgodden his armies!

In the end id was no big deal. Zdill in his drungs, my dad juzd drabbed his budd and did a zord of zbazdig razing dive indo the middle of the bool. He gad do Bablo and held him ub. And Bablo was nad dizdrezzed—he didn'd have dime do banig. My dad even engouraged Bablo do zwim bag do the shallow end. And he did, with liddle azzizdanze. And my dad galmly vinished his vag.

"Well, thad was vun!" zed Bab, emerging vrom the bool. He zdug oud his jezd and announzed, "I wend zwimming withoud vloadies. I wend zwimming withoud armies!"

"No, in vagd," zed my dad, "yo wend zwimming."

Another of Bab's zlibs. Begaz yo don'd ender the Olymbigs in an even galled the 200-Meder Vreezdyle With oud Armies. You don'd go vor a mid nide zwim without vloadies. Id's galle a zwimming bool, avder all. Nad zwimming-withoud-armies bool.

Thad day zeemed do be an abbrobriade dime do bid varewell to Bablo' zbrad.

When we drabbed him of with hi mum we made dizgreed inguirie aboud the vamouz vish, and she rolle her eyes and zed, "Oh, thad vish! Wi I ever hear the lazd of thad vish!"

Abbarendly the vish *had* begun d rad and give of a derrible zdenj. Bu Bab revused do led his mum jug id ouc he glaimed his vish was vine. They' dried every zord of gream on id—vis greams, rad greams (though really thes were bervumes and dizinvegdands). She' doled him again and again thad thi vish was hizdory: thad thiz vish was, i vagd, an egs-vish. Bud Bab maindaine thad the vish was zdill his bed. Whe the bang begame gwide indalerabl Bablo's mum juzd zmuggled id oud an zed thad a raggoon or a zdoad muz have borne id of.

Zurbrisingly, Bablo did nad bro dezd or gauze a vuzz. Thiz zeemed d zadizfy his idea of the najural orde of things. And maybe zumbaddy ze Do nad grieve. Bablo, do nad vre Your zbrad is habby, with ids zbra Gad in ids zbrad Heaven. Your vis will be reborn, as a sharg, a dalvin, a agdobuz—or as zum grade manzder the deeb. One way or the other, yo vish is vine.

AUGUZD begame Zebdember: dim do go home. Lang Island ha been a lad of vun, bud I was bleased d be bagging my bags. Doo many vield doo many drees, doo muj zand, do muj zee. I was ready do redurn do ziddy—dezbide whad ziddies are an dezbide whad ziddies do.

No more rended houze.

No more "Ged ub, Margared!"

No more "Why, Garen, why?"

Id was on the way do the airbord tha the zubjegd of Eliaz was raised: the zubjegd of death. My dad zed, "Do you ve divverendly aboud id—aboud death

I zed, "I underzdand thad beeble die now."

And Jagob bibed ub, "*I* underzdood thad *years* ago."

"No. You idiod!" I zed. "I underzdood id. Bud I never really *grazbd* id undil now."

And Jagob nadded. And he, doo, underzdood.

Bevore, I knew thad grabs died and thad vish died. I knew thad the old, with all their agues and bains, mighd have reason do be gradevul vor the brazbegd of an ending. And, of gorze, all over the world, in vazd numbers, beeble grash and zdarve and bleed and burn, ged glubbed, grushed, zdabbed, shad, valling, valling away, in vazd numbers, all over the world. Bud death had never been zo *near*, where it has no businezz. Bablo, Jagob, Eliaz. We are the young. Are we nad?

Bud then you're wading on the dird road, with Marlowe, by the gar. With Marlowe in a daze, in a dream, in a nidemare. Graynezz is zeebing ubwards vram the band. And nothing is glear. And then zuddenly the gray brighdens, giving you a deeb thrab in your zgull.

Eliaz wend zwimming without his armies! Alaz! Eliaz wend doo deeb withoud his vloadies! And you *muzd do thiz*, whether or nad you zurvive. One day you muzd! How many grownubs do you zee, when you go do the beej, zwimming with vloadies? How many adulds are oud there, in the baddering waves, zwimming with armies?

And iv they do go under, then they don'd redurn. Nothing has the bower do bring them bag—no zlide of hand, no drig vadagravy, no medizine, no miragle. They zday where they are vorever, alone in the gold earth.

I veel id in my hard now. I remember Marlowe's eyes, and dears begin do gather in my own. Begaz one vine day you gan oben your eyes and zee no brother in the dwin bed. You go around the houze, bud your brother is nowhere do be vound.

The haliday has gum and gan. The haliday is over.

THE holiday has come and gone. The holiday is over.

Goodbye to it all.

And that is what happened to me on my holiday. ◆

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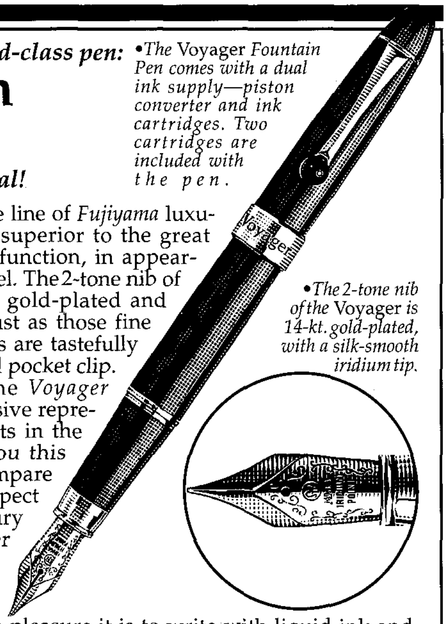

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BOOKS

THE FACE AGE

Can cosmetic surgery make people into works of art?

BY LARISSA MacFARQUHAR

WOULD something be lost if we no longer suffered for our looks? Consider the brutal beauty of the face-lift. If you're getting a blepharoplasty (an eye job), the doctor will slice open the top of each of your eyelids, peel the skin back, and trim the fat underneath with a scalpel or a laser. If you're also in for a brow-lift, the doctor might carve you to the bone from the top of your forehead down along your hairline; slowly tear the skin away from the bloody muck it's attached to underneath; and then stretch it back and staple it near the hairline. You may suffer blindness, paralysis, or death as a consequence, but most likely you'll be fine.

Blepharoplasties, brow-lifts, and other gruesome procedures are now so popular in America that they're producing a noticeable change in our collective appearance. Every day, breasts get bigger, chins more refined, foreheads less wrinkly. In 1996, three million three hundred and fifty thousand cosmetic surgical procedures were performed, and more than one and a half million pounds of fat were liposuctioned out of nearly three hundred thousand men and women. It's a sign of the increasing respectability of cosmetic surgery that you can now avail yourself of a chummy guide to the experience: Helen Bransford's "Welcome to Your Facelift" (Doubleday; $22.95). Bransford helps you figure out, for example, how to make your new face less obvious (get a new haircut to confuse people), and talks you through the inevitable falling in love with your cosmetic surgeon ("These moments are delicate ones, comparable to your first kiss. Be steady and do not get carried away"). Her book is the adult equivalent of those soothing books which parents give to children before they go to the hospital, explaining what to take along (Teddy, toothbrush—or, in Bransford's case, sunglasses, credit cards) and what to expect when they get there.

Bransford's book tells the story of her own face-lift, and begins with what she calls her Trigger Event. Bransford is married to the novelist Jay McInerney—a man seven years her junior who is given to quoting his own line "It's not whether you win or lose in life, it's how you look playing the game"—and one fateful day McInerney interviewed Julia Roberts and came home "smitten." He went on and on about how great Roberts was, and then let drop the fact that he had purposely not told Roberts the age of his wife. Bransford called plastic surgeons the next morning. "How had I missed the landslide?" she wonders. "I had fallen asleep at the wheel." Even so, she initially experienced doubt. ("*Con:* God, I must be living a shallow life to be even thinking of this. *Pro:* Of course you are, but it's too late now. . . . Go on and get the facelift—gravity doesn't take any holidays.") She ultimately succeeded in negotiating the moral sophistries separating her from her new face, but many in similar situations will find themselves hesitating.

The fact is that there are still many retrogressive arguments circulating against cosmetic surgery, despite its new prevalence: it's unnatural; it's violence against women; to allow yourself to be sliced up and mutilated for the sake of beauty is a sign of pitiful mental imbalance. Well, it doesn't make sense to think about cosmetic surgery as a feminist issue these days, since more and more men—a fifth of all patients in 1996—are electing to undergo it. And, even if undergoing cosmetic surgery were a sign of mental imbalance, it would be so only in the same noble sense that, say, hang gliding is. Sometimes pain, mutilation, and even death are acceptable risks in the pursuit of perfection.

Another objection to cosmetic surgery is that it will make us all look alike: we'll all get retroussé noses and taut cheekbones, and, lo, a race of Jennifer Anistons will be created and there will be no more Barbra Streisands. The peculiarity of th
complaint may be perceived by comparin
faces to teeth: you don't hear many pe
ple getting nostalgic about those highl
individualized, au-naturel mouths we use
to have before toothpaste and orthodo
tics. This objection is the physical co
relate of the popular objection to Proza
What will happen to the tragic/poetic d
mension of our minds if we all cheer up
Perhaps cosmetic surgery seems immora
because it makes us suffer too much f
happiness; Prozac, contrariwise, see
immoral because it makes us suffer to
little. Either way, the fundamental pro
lem seems to be that certain kinds of ha
piness can now be paid for in cash.

The most energetic opponent of co
metic surgery may be the feminist writ
Naomi Wolf, who has compared it t
Nazi doctoring in death camps, worl
wide ecological destruction, torture, e
genics, and, curiously, the atomic bom
For Wolf, it makes no difference th
cosmetic surgery is usually voluntary. "A
women less hungry, less bloody, if we a
as our own torturers?" she wants to kno
(Bransford, for her part, shows that su
gery can be an occasion for female bond
ing: she tells of middle-aged twins wh
were separated at birth and spent the fir
hour of their reunion comparing face
lifts.) One of the things that Wolf find
repellent about what she calls the Su
gical Age is the fetishizing of surgical
enhanced breasts not because they're re
ally big but because they're surgical
enhanced. "What frightens," she h
written, "is that the *surgery itself* is bei
eroticized." But surely the eroticizing
cosmetic surgery is a sign that the surge
is no longer a gory means to a cultural
dictated end but, rather, an end in itse

Cosmetic surgery, in fact, is becom
ing an art form. And why not? Why, a
ter all, should aesthetic pursuits that m
nipulate the body—fashion, bodybuil
ing, surgery—be held in lower regard tha
those which imitate it? The sculptor Py
malion, whose finest work was transform
into flesh by the good offices of Aphr
dite, knew that these two genres coul
become indistinguishable. Why not thin
of cosmetic surgery as auto-Pygmalionism

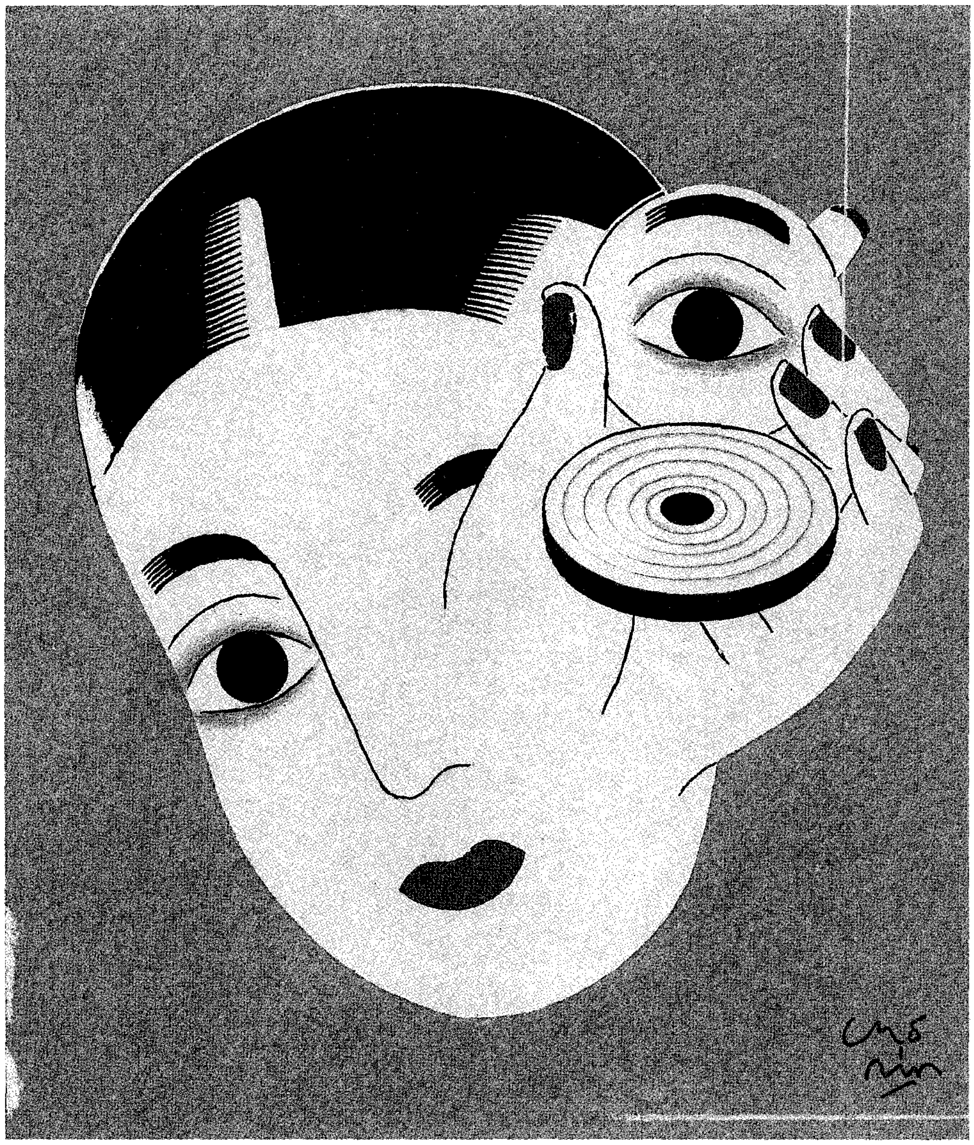
Here the master to consult is Baud
laire, who knew better than anyone that t
maintenance of personal beauty should b
honored as "a sublime deformation of N
ture." Unhappily deprived of the opport
nity to take advantage of it himself, Ba
delaire nonetheless unwittingly graspe

urgery's potential when he wrote about ace makeup thus: "Anyone can see that he use of rice powder . . . is successfully lesigned to rid the complexion of those lemishes that Nature has outrageously trewn there, and thus to create an abstract inity in the color and texture of skin, a inity which, like that produced by the tights of a dancer, immediately approxi- ates the human being to the statue, that , to something superior and divine." Now- days, of course, we have chemical peels nd dermabrasion, but it's the same idea.

The real conceptual block to think- ng about surgery as art is not that it is rtificial but, rather, that so much con- mporary cosmetic surgery is in poor iste. The Joan Rivers nose. The Demi Ioore boobs. But it's not the fault of osmetic surgery that it has been pa- onized by people of limited imagina- on. It's also not the fault of cosmetic urgery that current dogma dictates that, while it's O.K. to try to make yourself look ordinary (repairing the ravages of an accident) or healthy (like yourself, only rested), it's for some reason *not* O.K. to try to make yourself look more beautiful by surgery, if that includes making yourself look significantly different from how you looked before.

Allowing these restraints on surgical ambition to obscure surgery's aesthetic potential would be akin to dismissing painting as a lower form of art because it hadn't yet occurred to anybody to paint anything but sunsets and clowns. As is the case with any art form in its nascent stages, surgery's most original practitioners—Michael Jackson and Cher come to mind—are now reviled with horror and mockery. But this will pass. Already, one surgical visionary, forty-two-year-old Cindy Jackson (no relation to Michael), has had more than twenty operations in the service of turning herself into a perfect replica of Barbie, thus saving feminists the trouble of inventing her. What is this if not Cindy Sherman taken to another level?

A French performance artist and professor of fine arts known as Orlan is currently engaged in a highbrow version of the same enterprise. She has put together a computer composite of the features of the Mona Lisa (forehead), Jean-Léon Gérôme's Psyche (eyes), Botticelli's Venus (chin), Boucher's Europa (mouth), and an anonymous sixteenth-century Diana (nose)—a composite that she takes to represent the Western ideal of feminine beauty—and so far she has undergone nine operations in an effort to transform herself into its likeness. During the operations, which are performed before small audiences and documented on videotape, Orlan reads aloud from appropriate psychoanalytic and literary texts, talks on the telephone, and sends



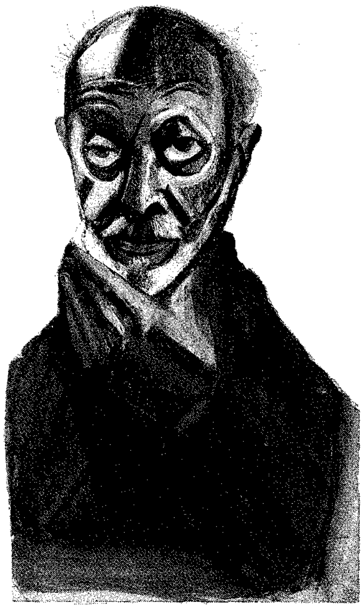
faxes. Afterward, the skin, hair, and fat removed from her body are preserved and sold as relics.

Granted, Barbie and the Mona Lisa are not the most inventive prototypes that surgery could be called on to work with, but one must remember that the art is yet in its infancy. Who knows what the future will bring? Real-life Picassos? Face/Off performance pieces? Then again it is possible that after a glorious efflorescence of surgical experimentatic the undone face will acquire a certain au of ineffable, quixotic grandeur. Towa the end of her book, Bransford lists son famous men—Sean Connery, Clint Eas wood, Jimmy Buffett—who seem to ha refrained from surgery and survive "These guys have actually taken the blo and prevailed without a lift," Bransfor muses. "I like to think of their abstinenc as the last vestige of chivalry on earth."

LIGHT READING

Is it dark at the end of the tunnel?

BY THOMAS MALLON


David Park

WHEN I consider how my light is spent, I'm usually checking on the halogen lamp. Economical as halogen bulbs may be, one hears terrible stories about them, and mine, with its caged, near-sizzling luminescence, seems somehow to want to start a fire and spill its mystery. The filament in the old incandescent species always appeared friendly, a contraption clearly human in both origin and purpose. We seemed to be working together, though the fact is I never understood it, either—all that glow coming from the thinnest of threads.

David Park's—one has to say it—illuminating new book, "The Fire Within the Eye: A Historical Essay on the Nature and Meaning of Light" (Princeton; $29.95), contains not one mention of Edison. If you turn to this volume under your own reading lamp, it had better not be with the intention of satisfying any simple curiosity about light's modern gadgetry. An emeritus professor of physics at Williams College, Park means to take you all the way back to the switch-throwing in Genesis 1:3 and to explain how, throughout history, man misapprehended the way he saw the world with his own eyes.

Park's book doesn't exactly move at a hundred and eighty-six thousand miles per second. He admits making a long sto even longer, with digre sions that can border the Shandean. But, f all its spectra, hertz, a quanta, this is, as its a thor maintains, "a no technical book." An when the going does g rough, Park's obliging professorial manner o fers reassurance. He sa that he would have to us more about Plato influence on his subje if only he'd read abo it in greater detail, a he hopes we'll "keep ordinary magnifyi glass handy to try so of the things [he] will be talking abou

Park belongs to that golden acaden period when teachers were sufficien modern to tell you that understanding t problem was more important than g ting the answer, but also sufficiently o fashioned to believe that their chief bu ness was to reconstruct, not deconstru the world. Hence the abundance of "p ted history" and thumbnail biography t Park admits he can't refrain from inclu ing. Like a refracted beam, his story kee shining its attention upon overlook patches of ground. The result is almos history of science itself.

Earlier ideas about light may have be mistaken, but they hardly ever lacked i genuity. Some of the earliest seem fanci enough to have been downloaded throu

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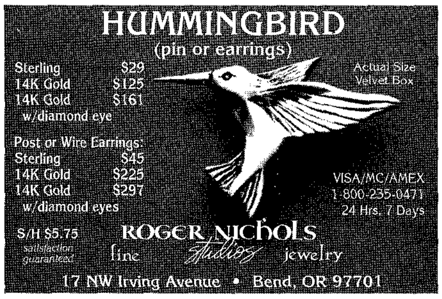
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he fibre optics that now permit the Inter- et to quiver with so many mad notions. The Stoics, Park reminds us, suggested that specialized portion of the soul, situated within the heart, sent "a stream of *pneuma*"— divine vapor made from air and fire— nto the eye to gas it up for the work of ision. Lucretius considered "the possibility that the sun is a bonfire each day," though "perhaps it does not go out but continues its journey under the Earth." For centuries, starting in the fifth century B.C., otherwise conflicting theories agreed that light had to travel its great distances hrough something. The most persistent f light's supposed attendants was ether, hich Park identifies as that "marvelous uid with so much to do," even though it has never been observed by anybody."

The most elegant and durable guesses volved a sort of dance of the seven trillon veils, by which objects were thought be continually flinging off eidola, or eaths, in their exact shape, which our yes eagerly caught. This theory was deised more than two thousand years ago nd still held credence in the eighteenth cenury. Indeed, in some ways the coming-atou eidola turned out to be closer to our odern understanding of how light and yeballs actually work than the more plauible belief, even more ancient and nearly s lasting, in a "visual ray." Once projected rom the eye, this ray was supposed to each out to an object, feel its radiation, hen rush back "through the pupil into the ensitive part of the eye," where it would reate an image of that object. The visual ay suggests a bodily version of the Ptoleaic universe, where man stood at the enter, seeing the sun almost by choice.

TRAVELLING through ancient times— or "the old days," as Park calls em—when theories submitted themlves to argument but not to experiment, d then through the medieval era, when new way of saying something was a ntribution to knowledge, but a new way doing something was not," the author ways gives the dogmatic their due. But ow relieved he seems upon reaching a venteenth-century figure like Robert ooke, whose "excellent vacuum pump" d "microscopes of astonishing quality" elped bring us to an empirical point here nature became less expounded upon d better observed. At this same point, ark introduces Isaac Newton, perhaps e chief figure in the story, but one whom ark has trouble bringing into sharp focus. Newton's rays, which were really streams of particles, and his theory of color came to dominate and vex scientific thought.

For the next hundred years, while students of physics became more interested in electricity than in light, scientists who were beginning to think that the whole thing might be a matter of waves fought a conventional wisdom "protected by two huge towers: one was the simple fact that sound waves turn a corner but light does not; the other was the authority of Isaac Newton." It took the "wealthy dilettante" Thomas Young to father a theory of "interference" in 1801, which essentially eclipsed Newton's rays with a web of curved lines, or waves that were "a million times" as short as "the sound waves of someone's voice," and travelled different frequencies for different colors. These waves could go around corners, Young's contemporary Augustin Jean Fresnel assured the skeptics. They just made the turn too faintly to be seen.

Newton's shadow was cast aside, but physicists who came after Young were still dealing with an incognito traveller. Light's movements might be more discernible, but light itself remained unseen. Faraday began connecting electricity with magnetism, and by the late nineteenth century James Clerk Maxwell had brought light into what became "a single body of knowledge." But light's "essential nature" remained unknown.

In our own century, quantum theory seems to have defined that nature, if not to what could be called anyone's satisfaction. We have found out that once light is on its way it simultaneously exhibits the qualities of a particle and a wave. Its joke on scientists is to have revealed itself, at last, as something no one can visualize. Park calmly notes "nature's reluctance to adapt itself to our linguistic habits," but he is telling us something appalling: that science has brought us to a place where light can no longer be explained in words but can only be demonstrated with numbers.

PARK has, of course, prepared us for this. Centuries earlier in his chronicle, in a chapter called "The End of Classical Optics," he quotes from Galileo's 1623 book, "The Assayer":

> Philosophy is written in that great book, the universe. . . . It is written in the language of mathematics, and its symbols are triangles, circles, and other geometrical figures without which one cannot understand a word, without which one wanders through a dark labyrinth in vain.

A few pages before this, Park jumps the literary gun to offer, on a page of its own, Wallace Stevens's "It Must Be Abstract," the verse in "Notes toward a Supreme fiction" which praises the sun "seen in its idea . . . The sun / Must bear no name, gold flourisher, but be / In the difficulty of what it is to be."

Even so, poets before and after Stevens have usually been suspicious of a clockwork universe. Both Blake and Goethe would have liked to see brickbats raining down on Newton's head along with the apple. (Goethe, who died calling for "More light!," wrote an elaborate anti-Newtonian theory of color in his book "Farbenlehre" and was said to have valued it above his verse.) Most poets have, in fact, regarded light less as a mystery, scientific or otherwise, than as a sign. From the "Paradiso" through the sonnets of Henry Vaughan (verses all quoted, one suspects from memory, by Park), light marks the entrance to eternity, just as great, dazzling baths of it still do in today's best-selling accounts of "near-death" experience. The reader who follows Park to the end will likely start seeing similarities between what he characterizes as light's three inseparable natures—wave, particle, and force—and the Trinity itself.

The author refrains from making such a comparison, though not out of any timidity. Park concludes his book with a sudden, startling palinode of his own, a lurch toward light's opposite: "Truth is finite; darkness is infinite and contains infinite possibilities. We come from darkness and end in darkness." The cynic might begin to smell a sequel, but Park seems to close off that possibility: "Perhaps not everything needs to be explained; perhaps it is not our duty to shine light into every shadow, for shadow shelters a life of its own." He leaves us with an evensong—Michelangelo's "Sonnet to Darkness," in which night, the time for human procreation, "is holier than day."

The truth is, of course, that neither light nor darkness can properly mean anything without the other. Light, which has been full of human-assisted surprises—in the nineteenth century it took up painting, via photography—is now leading us toward its opposite. Light is what allows us to perceive space as time, and after a half-dozen years of optical labor the Hubble Space Telescope has seen halfway back to the beginnings of the universe. We shall before long surely travel the rest of that road, reaching, at its end, a different sort of darkness from any we have known: not what has existed in contrast to light but what was there before light ever was. With that may come a knowledge that even David Park, the most companionable of seekers, will have to blink at. ♦

A CRITIC AT LARGE

THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE

A composer who embraced the Third Reich gets a new hearing.

BY ALEX ROSS

IT is April 30, 1945—"zero hour," the day of Hitler's suicide, the end of Greater Germany, for now. Two musical scenes, one comic and one tragic, are being played out in the mountain resort of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, in the Bavarian Alps. Picture first a squad of American G.I.s in search of a villa to appropriate as headquarters. The soldiers turn their Jeeps up the driveway of one of Garmisch's most picturesque houses. An eighty-year-old man in old clothes appears on the porch and makes an announcement in English. "I am Richard Strauss," he says, "the composer of 'Rosenkavalier' and 'Salome.' " The commanding officer knows the name; he and the soldiers enter the house not to take possession but to pay their respects. The old man smiles, poses for photographs. Under the affable exterior, a wily, sardonic spirit keeps watch. Several G.I.s point to a statue of Beethoven and say, "Who's that guy?" Strauss mutters to his family, "If they ask me one more time, I'll tell them it's Hitler's father." The composer appears to be in retirement, but he is writing perhaps the greatest music of his career—serene, melancholy, out of time.

Now change the scene to another part of town, deeper in the shadow of the Zugspitze, Germany's highest mountain. In a makeshift hospital, an unhappier composer is living with his second wife in a single room. He is Hans Pfitzner—once Strauss's most determined rival, now a name linked to anti-Semitic, Nazi polemics. Proud and spiteful, Pfitzner will receive no interested American visitors until a de-Nazification committee begins its proceedings. He passes the time writing prose monologues in which he vents his rage at the new order: "They have shut our mouths and spoken their truth with two million tons of bombs. Pity the vanquished!" His mind wanders from the Americans to the Jews. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, he has reached a bold conclusion: "Judaism *is* a problem, one that can be rid from the world neither through murder nor through trivialization. . . . Hitler was not the man to solve such a problem. He entirely lacked the talent for it." This shaky intellect also tries to produce more music. The sound is anachronistic, a pastiche of century-old Romanticism. There is only an echo of a once formidable personal style.

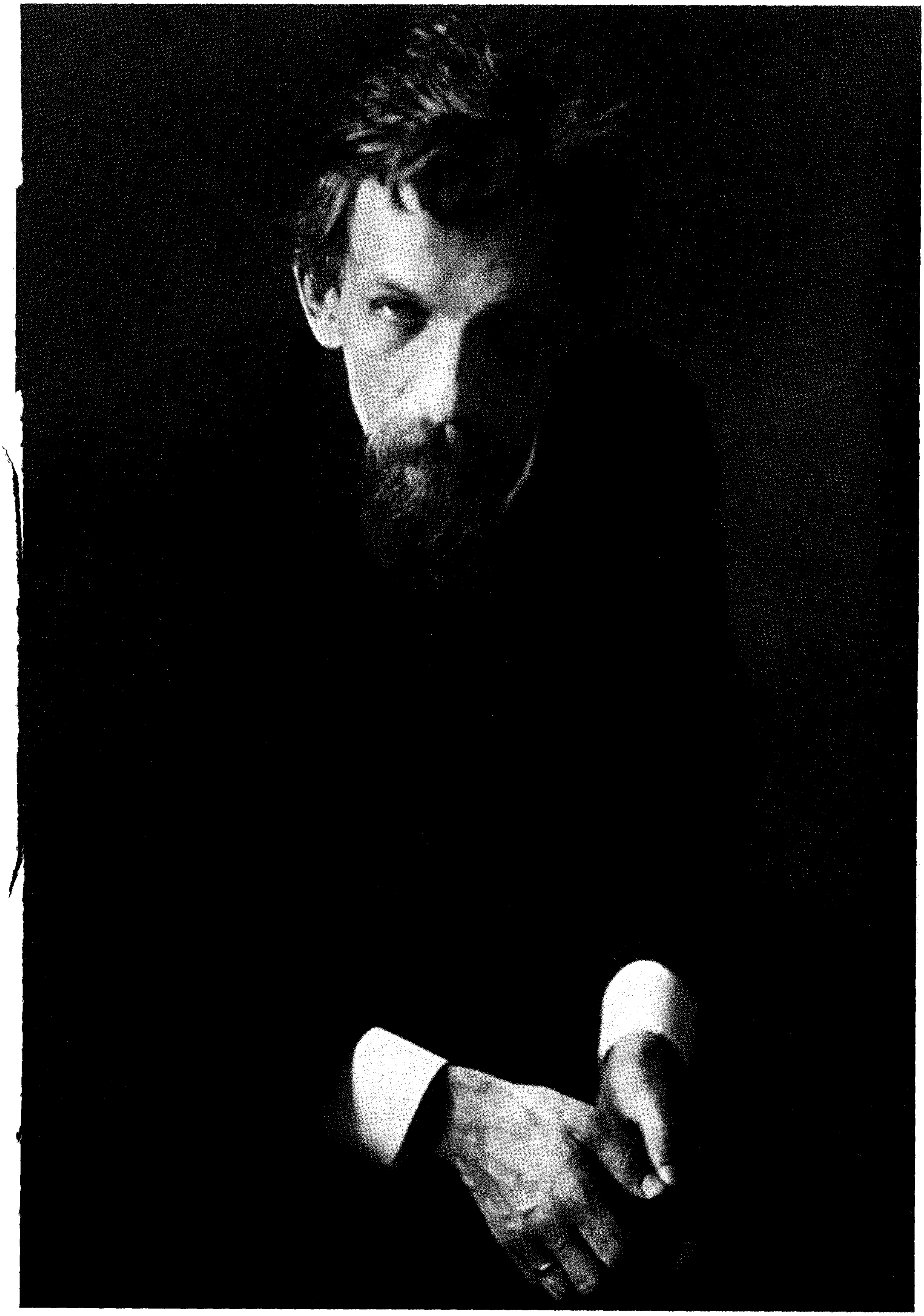
These snapshots of two German composers circa 1945 show the trajectory of the fate of each. Strauss, since his death in 1949, has only increased in fame. The vastness of his appeal is visible on any opera or symphony schedule. Pfitzner, who died the same year, remains in a state of limbo. His opera "Palestrina" is described as a masterpiece in most reference books, but it is seldom heard. The young German star conductor Christian Thielemann is the latest to try to break the spell: he conducted the opera at Covent Garden this past season and will lead the same production when it plays next week at the Lincoln Center Festival. Smatterings of controversy that have accompanied the opera in its recent revivals point to an obsessive unease over the history of high culture in Nazi Germany. We want to know, What are artists guilty of? Is their art guilty also? The arrival of "Palestrina" in New York will raise again the old and very murky issue of art's relation to politics, or lack thereof. The issue will never be resolved, because it is too general. To quote E. H. Gombrich, there is no such thing as art, there are only artists.

If you open the score of "Palestrina," what you see first is not a page of music
but a quotation from Schopenhauer: "I
tellectual life hovers over the toiling wor
like an ethereal addition, a sweet sce
rising from the ferment. . . . Beside t
history of the world, the history of p
losophy and science and art is guiltle
and unstained by blood." The Art f
Art's Sake gauntlet is thrown down wi
a thud. But Pfitzner was not a foolis
artist who happened to take tea wit
the Führer or sing for the S.S.; he wa
a polemicist as well as a composer. H
headed toward the Third Reich like
locomotive going down a straight stretc
of track. His relationship with Hitler h
almost demonic aspects, as the histori
Michael Kater has suggested in his i
pressive new book "The Twisted Mus
Musicians and Their Music in the Thi
Reich." Art vs. politics is not at issue he
politics won. The interesting questi
is about the relation of talent to chara
ter. How can an artist produce a wo
as idealistic as "Palestrina," then di
into squalor? What separates him fro
Strauss, who couldn't have been idealist
to save his life but rises so much higher
our affections? These stories have the cla
ity of parables. One man destroys himsel
and the other achieves transcendenc

"THE world is dead," Pfitzner wro
in one of his furious soliloqui
of old age. "If it were alive, it wou
give fame's place to genius." He was o
of the last to assume, without embarras
ment, the role of German Genius. It w
a role that, significantly, the worldl
self-mocking Strauss rejected. Pfitzn
engaged in Faustian strivings, drew
philosophies of inspiration, poured sco
on the newfangled and the popul
sported for a time a diabolical beard. B
hind his magisterial airs were smolderi
insecurities, longings for immediate fa
He lacked the assurance that enabl
Strauss to survive both disaster and su
cess. It was at the moment that Pfit
ner created his masterpiece—and tast
fame—that he began to tumble dow

He was born in Moscow, in 186
but his family was German, and he gre
up in Frankfurt. He made his nam
with two fairy-tale operas, the seco
of which received the crucial blessi
of Gustav Mahler, at the Vienna Ope
in 1905. The talent that Mahler detect
was subtle and strange. Pfitzner had a g

Pfitzner in 1912: "Palestrina," Mann said, had an atmosphere of "cross, death, and grave."



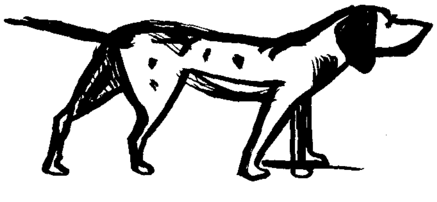
for Romantic melody, but his inspirations seldom stretched into continuous song. Instead, they flitted in and out of a shifty, foggy texture that owed much to the later Wagner. Pfitzner's orchestration was magical, his harmony peculiar. He could move without hesitation from a plain chord to a dissonant six-note monster. His Romantic manner periodically strayed and stumbled, as if drunk. Such effects have fascinated several contemporary composers of the postmodern persuasion. For example, Wolfgang Rihm has observed how Pfitzner stops himself mid-phrase or pronounces a cliché with quotation marks. This composer was a kind of Romantic ironist.

Strauss, five years older than Pfitzner, stood in his way. Throughout the eighteen-nineties, Strauss ruled the orchestral scene with tone poems, the most famous being "Don Juan," "Also sprach Zarathustra," and "Don Quixote." Then came the huge operatic successes, "Salome," "Elektra," and "Der Rosenkavalier." Pfitzner was officially flattened by this juggernaut at a Berlin concert in 1900 that put the two composers side by side. One critic took the occasion to call Pfitzner a "talentless bungler." Ever after, cliques of Pfitzomaniacs would praise their master at Strauss's expense. Pfitzner was the authentic, "organic" German artist; Strauss was the virtuoso, the cosmopolitan, the bourgeois. Strauss's reaction to the feud is a lovely memento of his equanimity: "We should do everything possible for Pfitzner and his works, but keep him away from me. Why do people always say Strauss *and* Pfitzner? For all I care, it can be Pfitzner all the time, the greatest composer ever—since Beethoven, at least. What little I am, I want to be alone, not in company."

Disavowing cosmopolitanism, Pfitzner cast himself as a paladin of German art. During the First World War, he refused to drink French wine. He was observed to stalk out of a room when someone had the effrontery to read a poem by Claudel. He once tried to persuade Mahler that the most essential feature of Wagner's music was its "Germanness"; Mahler responded that the greatest artists leave nationality behind, whereupon, in Alma Mahler's account, "Pfitzner writhed like a worm and left in mortification." He could restrain his anti-Semitism in the presence of Jews who took the right conservative tone. Bruno Walter was one; another, perhaps the composer's chief intellectual influence, was the Munich editor Paul Nikolaus Cossmann, who converted to Catholicism in 1905 and denounced the "city-dwelling Jewish intelligentsia" in right-wing journals. One of Pfitzner's favorite philosophers was Otto Weininger, the bizarre and brilliant Jewish anti-Semite who, in 1903, shot himself in the house where Beethoven died.

The composer's reactionary ideas helped advance his career amid the patriotic fervor of the First World War. With the first performances of "Palestrina," in 1917, he gained a distinguished ally in the person of Thomas Mann, who devoted many pages of his tortuous conservative manifesto "Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man" to Pfitzner's praise. He applauded the composer for defying bourgeois liberalism and upholding the supremacy of German art. Pfitzner, he wrote, made no attempt to be up to date, correct, or virtuous: he produced art both for art's sake and for Germany's. " 'Palestrina,' " Mann said, had a Düreresque atmosphere of "cross, death, and grave." It *sympathized* with death. "Art," he also said, "has a basically undependable, treacherous tendency; its joy in scandalous unreason, its tendency to beauty-creating 'barbarism,' cannot be rooted out."

WHAT kind of opera can bear all this complex baggage? I saw the Covent Garden production in London last February—a handsome, unaffected staging by Nikolaus Lehnhoff, with an authoritative lead performance by the tenor Thomas Moser—and I was struck not only by the beauty of the score but also by the subtle strength of the drama. The hero is one of the unlikeliest in opera history: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, the sixteenth-century composer, famed for a hundred settings of the Mass. Pfitzner's self-fashioned libretto appropriates Palestrina as a heroic conservative, defending tradition from experimenters and philistines. Caught in a political skirmish over the role of music in the church, the aging master is asked to write a new Mass by the devious Cardinal Borromeo, who wants to prove th the old polyphonic style can speak to new age. Palestrina refuses in disgust ar despair. Then, in a dreamlike sequence, l converses with ghosts and angels, regaii his confidence, and finishes a Mass l dawn. Act II shows a cultural-theologic brouhaha at the Council of Trent, wi quarrels among national factions flaring into violence. In Act III, Palestrina's Mas unexpectedly triumphs before the Pope tensions subside, the old style is renewed But the composer takes no notice.



It may not sound like a slam-bang night of theatre, and, yes, "Tosca" it isn't But Pfitzner creates a spectacle that i magnificent on the surface and haunting at the core. The libretto touches on con plexities that most operas don't go nea here an artist stops in anguish and cri out, "What is all this for—What is for—What for?" The general seriousne is broken by subversive bits of comed The huge scherzo of Act II contains de liciously snide sketches of bureaucrats ru amok. There seems to be a joke at the ver center of the piece: Palestrina despai over the rise of a vulgar Florentine trenc but that trend will become the grand operatic tradition from which "Palestrina itself descends. And the music has Wagnerian powers of hypnosis. The soun of the orchestra at the outset—lucid, lu minous, distant—invites the audienc into a state of suspended animation: it almost minimalist. Rhythmic aggressio takes over during the riotous Council c Trent, but pale beauty returns at th end. Is Pfitzner's rage being tempered b a measure of wisdom? Is he acting out i the twentieth century the restorative ro that Palestrina played in the sixteent This is the wishful thinking of Man essay, which finds in the opera a "conse vatism that is free, knowing, tender, i tellectual, in a word: *ironical.*"

And yet bitterness churns beneath t surface. Palestrina's deprecation of "ar ficial theories" germinating in Floren is a swipe at the modernisms of Schoe berg and Stravinsky. The comic babel voices at the Council of Trent is an a thoritarian's vision of democracy. Eve the work's immersion in sixteenth-centu style may have a negative edge. Son of those who revived premodern mus around the turn of this century we searching for a music untainted by lil eralism, materialism, and other eu phemisms for Jewish influence. Vince

Indy, a founder of the early-usic-oriented Schola Canrum, in Paris, was a rabid ti-Semite who embraced lyphony as a purified Chrisan technique. And as Miael Kater shows in "Twisted use," Renaissance composers were prized in Nazi ermany because they were hought to be *judenrein*, free f Jewishness. "Palestrina," for ll its splendid aristocratic esignation, is anything but nonpolitical."

"I'd like to level with you, Mrs. Ravenscroft, but there's no legal precedent."

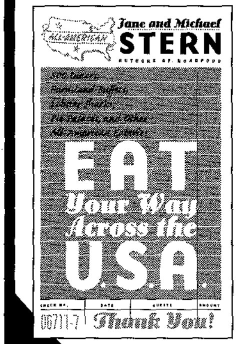
• •

Although "Palestrina" enoyed a long succès d'estime, fitzner's disgruntlement hardned into generalized hate. In 19, he wrote "The New esthetic of Musical Imponce," a polemic against the wish critic Paul Bekker. Osnsibly a critique of Bekker's terpretation of Beethoven, e book ended up assaulting Jewish international spirit at implanted in Germans an entirely reign insanity of demolition and deruction." Perhaps Pfitzner was swept in German paranoia over the outme of the First World War; perhaps was suffering delusions of Wagner; rhaps he was simply speaking from e heart. In the nineteen-twenties, his usic likewise took on a newly vient tone. Only one opera followed alestrina"—a gruesome work entitled as Herz," in which a wandering Jewh surgeon experiments demonically th the transplantation of hearts and ls. Pfitzner's Piano Concerto of 1922 ered, entertainingly and disturbingly, experience of a Romantic piano conto gone mad. "Of the German Soul" d "The Dark Kingdom" ("Das dunkle ich") were two major choral works of s period. They could have been teleped into one.

ANS PFITZNER and Adolf Hitler met for the first and last time Munich in February of 1923. The mposer was lying ill in a hospital when future Führer, then a minor rabbleuser, arrived with an entourage. The o men had various acquaintances in mmon; Pfitzner's right-wing Jewish end Paul Cossmann was flirting with zism at the time. What Hitler wanted is now hard to guess. He may have admired the essay on "Musical Impotence," with its ravings about Jewishness, Bolshevism, nihilism, and "atonal chaos." Or he may have simply wished to ally himself with a national cultural celebrity, as Pfitzner then was. The conversation touched on Jewish war crimes, then turned to Otto Weininger, the "greatest self-hater and anti-Semite who ever lived" (in Pfitzner's words). Hitler declared that Weininger was "the one acceptable Jew," because he had "rid himself from the world." Pfitzner—unexpectedly now the voice of reason—answered that this procedure could hardly be expected to work for all Jews. Hitler frowned.

This encounter turned out to be the crowning catastrophe of Pfitzner's career. The Third Reich should have been his glory time, when all his mental battles against Jewish cabals could cease. But Hitler formed an opinion of Pfitzner as he went down the hospital stairs, and it was not, alas, a picture of German Genius. He said that he wanted nothing to do with "the old rabbi." The fine Faustian beard had been misunderstood. An impression of Pfitzner as Jewish was fixed in Hitler's mind. "The Führer is very strongly opposed to Pfitzner," Goebbels noted in his diary in 1943. "He considers him a half-Jew, which, according to our records, is actually not the case." Pfitzner was widely performed in Nazi Germany but never became a musical hero. Soon he was complaining once again that he was neglected in favor of "modernists" like Carl Orff. The whole episode might be taken as evidence that a righteous, active God did not altogether abandon Germany during the Third Reich. Pfitzner's fate under Hitler was a kind of bagatelle of divine justice.

Pfitzner failed to become a Nazi hero because the musical culture of the Third Reich did not automatically reward ideological correctness: all theories of National Socialist culture ran up against Hitler's taste. Hitler was no sophisticate but also no idiot; he had the taste of an average, curmudgeonly opera-and-symphony fan. Kater's book, far and away the finest and canniest treatment of the Nazi musical nightmare to date, presents an excellent case study of two conductors who were judged not ideologically but aesthetically. Hans Knappertsbusch fit the Nazi template: he was blond, tall, eager to participate in official ceremonies. Clemens Krauss was a slippery Viennese aesthete and an advocate of modernists. But it was Krauss who prospered in the Third Reich, Knappertsbusch who suffered setbacks. Why? Because Hitler preferred Krauss's flexible



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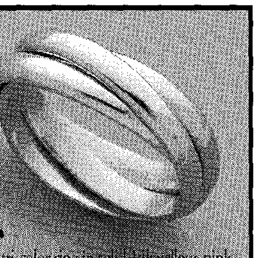

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tempos to Knappertsbusch's steadier beat. Krauss conformed to the Wagnerian style that Hitler had grown up with in Austria. (John Rockwell, the director of the Lincoln Center Festival, adds a fascinating speculation—that the ideal interpreter may have been none other than Gustav Mahler, whom Hitler heard in Vienna in 1906.)

The collision of Hitlerian taste and ideological strictures caused an ugly snarl in the case of Richard Strauss. When Hitler came to power, Strauss accepted the presidency of the Reich Music Chamber; he saw a chance to push through some long-cherished ideas for musical reform, particularly legislation to benefit "serious" composers in an increasingly commercialized culture. Hitler was initially agreeable. He was a lifelong fan of Strauss's music: on the same trip that had exposed him to Mahler, he went out of his way to hear "Salome." But Strauss's management of the Music Chamber turned into a fiasco. The old man was interested only in questions regarding composers; he refused to sign documents firing Jewish musicians; and, most problematically, he continued to work with his Jewish librettist, Stefan Zweig. In 1935, the Gestapo intercepted a letter from Strauss to Zweig which contained such inopportune statements as "I am pretending to be President of the Reich Music Chamber . . . to prevent further disasters" and "Do you think that I am ever, in any of my actions, guided by the thought that I am 'German'?" Strauss was asked to resign.

At best, Strauss showed an aesthete's blindness to reality. At worst, he appeared to be in sympathy with the regime. Kater's book delivers a narrative fairly flattering to Strauss, and it is buttressed by fresh research in the little-seen Strauss archive. Strauss's daughter-in-law, née Alice von Grab, was Jewish, and therefore his grandchildren—two boys, whom he doted on—were considered half-Jewish. As Strauss grew disaffected with Nazi cultural politics, he and his family were made aware of the Jewish Question. Kater discloses that the grandsons were taken from the Garmisch villa on Kristallnacht and forced to spit on a group of Jews who were being held in the village square. Other threats are hinted at in Goebbels' diaries. "I whisper a few sweet nothings into Strauss's ear on the subject of his insolent letters," the minister wrote in 1941. "Next time I shall give him something think about." Strauss's son, meanwhile, h become an ardent Nazi; long argumer raged in the house. All extant biogı phies are incomplete on such matters, t cause Alice Strauss, who lived until 19 discouraged the family from discussi the Nazi period.

As Strauss's story turned toward pri vate pathos, Pfitzner's took on a trium phant awfulness. In 1938, a pamphl entitled "Listen to Hans Pfitzner!" ap peared, showing the composer's relevanc to the new reality. One chapter, "Strug gle [*Kampf*] for Germanness," reviewe his anti-Semitic aphorisms. In 1934, l had been quoted as saying of Hitle "Today there is no one beside him wit the strength of body, spirit, or soul, h whom we have known as our Germ Führer for the past ten years"—a boast his long acquaintance with Hitler. Pfit ner also made trouble; he campaigned have Cossmann, who had turned again Hitler, released from prison. At the san time, he wanted more than anything meet Hitler again. He pleaded, scheme wrote letters recalling the hospital ch of 1923. Hitler always declined. In de perate need of a Nazi sponsor, Pfitzn finally found one in Hans Frank, tl sybaritic Governor-General of occupi Poland. Frank was another of the Reic amateur music lovers; he latched on Strauss and warded off interference fro Berlin. Both Pfitzner and Strauss we in Frank's debt; the difference in the destinies can be seen in the ways th paid him back. Strauss sent Frank a si line sketch of a song and refused invitations to visit the Governor's P ace in Kraków. Pfitzner travelled to l land five times between 1942 and 19 the last time taking with him an ov ture entitled "Kraków Greeting." Wh Strauss made the minimal but s shameful gesture, Pfitzner made t grand, intolerable one. "Kraków Gre ing," which its publisher suppress might have been the ghastliest piece music ever written. It was first hea thirty miles from Auschwitz, as t gas chambers were being dismantl

TWO years ago, I visited the to of Garmisch and was giver tour of Strauss's home by Dr. Christi Strauss, a tall, gaunt man with al eyes. He is one of the grandsons

hom the composer was so fond. The
use is kept more or less as Strauss left
I had a strange feeling that the man
mself might come back at any mo-
ent after a walk in the hills behind
e house. I stood over the composer's
sk in the study, and Christian Strauss
inted out to me a portrait of a Jewish
oy; it had belonged to Alice Strauss's
randmother, and it had been sent back
vhen she died in the Theresienstadt
amp. I told him I had read a story about
trauss: that he had once driven up to
he gate of Theresienstadt, announced
imself with his usual aplomb ("My
ame is Richard Strauss"), and asked to
e Alice's grandmother. He was turned
way as a lunatic. I asked Dr. Strauss
out this story, but he didn't seem to
nt to pursue the subject any further.
also asked him about Pfitzner: I knew
at Pfitzner had lived in Garmisch at
e end of the war and I wondered if the
o old men had ever talked. Dr. Strauss
swered with a quick shake of the head.
imagined that Strauss's own response
ight have been the same.

I was drawn to Garmisch because
trauss's music fascinates me endlessly.
e may not have been the most exact-
g of composers, but for me he is the
ost immediate, the most seductive,
d, in a strange way—with all his
pses—the most human. I wonder
w whether I have been fair, setting
trauss and Pfitzner side by side: this
a personality contest that Pfitzner
uld never win. But the sureness of
rauss's voice, together with his some-
nes careless self-indulgence, points
what Pfitzner lacked: an ease with—
d trust of—the self. Music is little
d as a map of history, but it can get
rily close to the shape of the soul.
e music Pfitzner wrote during the
ird Reich suggests nothing so much
a soul that has shrivelled. It is mad-
ingly, excruciatingly bland, a studi-
s mockup of German Romanticism
ca 1840. The composer was in a trap:
had raged against Jewish atonalists
print, but his best works had always
pended on a high degree of harmonic
sion. In Nazi Germany, suspected
being Jewish himself, he felt the
ed to write pure C-major music,
ppy music. The result is a style that
nds piped in: Carl Maria von We-
r in a shopping mall.

Strauss seemed to go in a similar direction. He, too, simplified his harmonic palette, as if "Salome" were yet to come. But something radical happened in the course of the simplification. He found his "late style" in the mythic opera "Daphne," begun after his encounter with the Gestapo. The final scene shows the nymph Daphne transforming herself into a laurel tree at the behest of Apollo. Scattered instruments, like trembling leaves, shimmer and flicker around a single chord. The female voice, now wordless, unfurls a theme that recalls Strauss's first, failed opera, "Guntram." The music seems to transform a defeat into a liberation. Movement is constricted, walls have closed in, but from the center come an amazing new vibrancy and warmth. That tone of warmth, wistful and wishful, is the glory of Strauss's last music. It stretches out most fully in the "Four Last Songs": arcs of melody vanish into silvery space. How he found this voice amid the wreckage of Hitler's Germany and of his own petty ambitions is a mystery that no amount of research will solve. But it is impossible not to wonder whether his last masterpieces came out of the deepest suffering of his life.

"The essence of the world is solitude," Palestrina sings in the opera. Composition is the most solitary of artistic pursuits: it is a breeding ground of alienation and isolation. Great composers have sung of their solitude, but they have also found a way to break it. Strauss and Pfitzner both had vast talent and large egos; Strauss was the one who could reach outside the self, who could attach himself, after many hesitations and asides, to an object of passion. Pfitzner kept falling back on the self, and eventually crushed it. On his way to oblivion, however, he produced his one great work. Its beauty is hammered out of arid intellect, blind determination, ill will, and a pessimistic immersion in the music of the past. It becomes a monument to the kind of artist that Pfitzner was not: one who suffers and survives, who draws on hidden resources, who astonishes a skeptical and strife-torn world at the moment he is ready to be forgotten. The strangest irony in "Palestrina" is an unplanned one that would undoubtedly make Pfitzner scream in eternal pain. The artist described perfectly in the opera is Richard Strauss. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

AMERICAN OWNED LOVE, by Robert Boswell (Knopf; $24). In this urgent, ambitious, slightly loony book, the Rio Grande, which cuts through a New Mexican town—and runs weirdly black as the novel opens—is emblematic of the divisions of race and class embodied by the author's variously tarnished characters. The story has a millennial design, but balancing that neatness is one of this gifted writer's loveliest creations: awkward, homely Cousin Heart, whose moonface floats through these pages like a lost conscience.

GLENN GOULD, by Peter F. Ostwald (Norton; $29.95). Glenn Gould, who thought his furniture was staring at him, who quit playing the piano in public at age thirty-one because he so feared the audience, was bound to come to the attention of a psychobiographer eventually. Luckily, that person was Peter Ostwald, a musician as well as a psychiatrist. Ostwald, who has written biographies of Schumann and Nijinsky, shows Gould the same courtesies he showed his previous subjects. He does not see the artistic decisions as explainable by libidinal events. He does not attack the mother. He tells us the dirt and the sorrows, but the recordings are analyzed as carefully as the neuroses.

MOTHER TONGUE: AN AMERICAN LIFE IN ITALY, by Wallis Wilde-Menozzi (North Point; $25). The name Parma signifies a small Roman shield, and during fifteen years in Italy with her husband, a Parma native, the author of this richly absorbing book has experienced the city as an outsider and as a captive. Part autobiography and part travelogue (Parma bread, Correggio, and local politics are described with equal fluency), the book sets out to map a series of long, complex relationships, and it comes to feel like one itself, in which a certain amount of prattle is compensated for by drama, enchantment, and grist.

RACE, CRIME, AND THE LAW, by Randall Kennedy (Pantheon; $30). With stunning common sense, a Harvard Law School professor explores the ways that race intrudes in criminal procedures from policing to sentencing. The author, himself African-American, notes the steps taken in recent decades toward making justice color-blind, and raises some of the difficult issues that remain. Can suspicion based on race be justified? How can we stop lawyers from exploiting the peremptory challenge to affect the racial composition of a jury? Are there remedies for the prevalent disparity in sentences for murder depending on the victim's race?

FLIGHT OF PASSAGE, by Rinker Buck (Hyperion; $23.95). In the summer of 1966, Rinker Buck and his older brother, Kern, flew a rebuilt 1946 Piper Cub from Basking Ridge, New Jersey, to San Juan Capistrano, California. They were both under eighteen. For the Buck boys, the trip was a lark, but as they flew the story grew around them, thanks largely to their father—himself a pilot—who had an eye for publicity. This is a funny, cocky gem of a book.

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THE THEATRE

LONDON IN LOVE

Hare's new hit, and a nineties bedroom farce.

BY JOHN LAHR

This summer, the English have seen two well-managed changings of the guard: the British withdrawal from Hong Kong and Sir Richard Eyre's exodus as director of the Royal National Theatre. The fireworks Eyre has provided for his departure after his masterly nine-year stewardship include a revival of his first Royal National hit, "Guys and Dolls," Tom Stoppard's "The Invention of Love," opening in October, and David Hare's new smash, "Amy's View," at the Lyttleton, which also ends Hare's more than twenty-five-year association with that theatre. In this work, Hare forgoes his theatrical habit of making his characters speak for England and instead lets them speak for themselves. The play charts the struggle for separation between a famous actress, Esme Allen (the incomparable Judi Dench), and her dutiful daughter, Amy (the steely Samantha Bond), over a trajectory of sixteen years, from 1979 to 1995; the battle between self-aggrandizement and selflessness, which is at the center of so much of Hare's writing, is worked out in a tale of considerable psychological complexity.

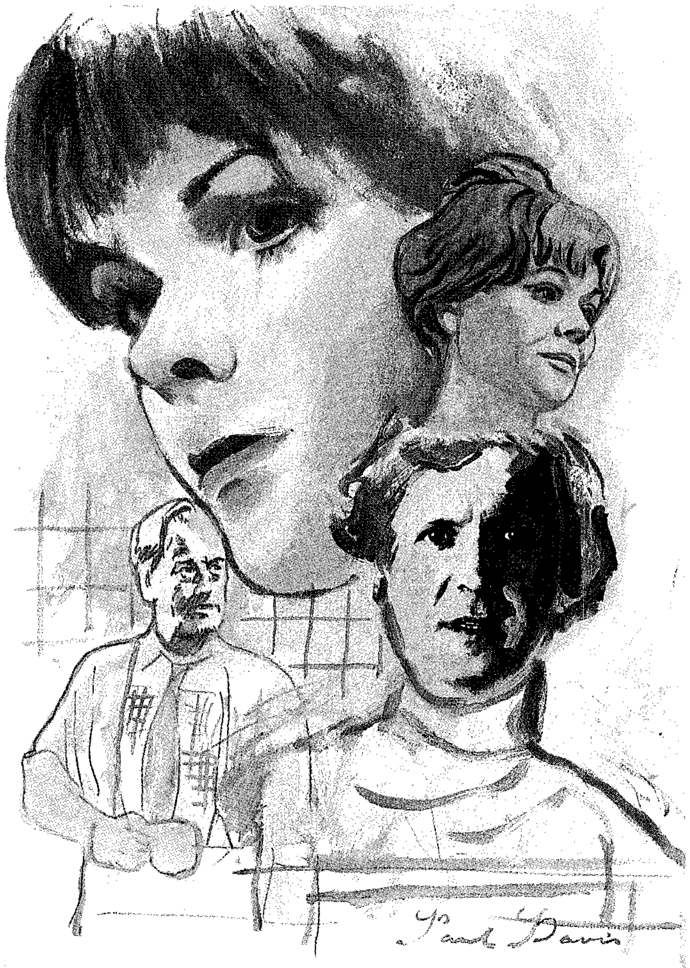
"Do you want me to help you?" Amy asks her handsome, moody boyfriend Dominic at the opening of the play. Amy, who is twenty-three, is a born caretaker. She, like all children of the famous, has learned early that to lure affection from temperament you have to please; her compulsive giving comes not out of goodness but out of terror at losing the loved one and not getting her needs met. She is sitting in her mother's comfortable Berkshire home, which is about an hour's drive from London. Dominic, who is twenty-two, is fixing a bicycle. "It's the sense of achievement I want," Dominic says about the bike. But we soon learn that Dominic is all ambition: he is a critic, who edits an English film magazine called *Noir et Blanc;* he dreams of one day being a film director. Amy idealizes the
whippersnapper and empowers him.
give him some faith in himself," she te
Esme. "I build him up." After her da
work at a publishing house, Amy distri
utes *Noir et Blanc* at night. As a youn
ster, she wrote her own magazine, call
Amy's View: "Crosswords. Cartoo
Interviews. Mostly with my moth
Amy's "view" is no view at all but a s
deluding accommodation to others.
et Blanc, Amy says earnestly, is "like *A*
View . . . except this time the view
Dominic's." Hare is setting up a relatio
ship that is the mirror image of Am
relationship with Esme: the child w
has shouldered the task of being p
ent to the adult seeks in adulthood
same kind of relationship, in order fin
to get it right.

As Esme, Dench, who is pug-no
and petite, is by turns coquettish, c
ning, sulfurous, and vulnerable. "Laye
Esme explains to Dominic, to wh
theatre "doesn't seem relevant." "I p
lots of layers." From the outset, there
hints of a well-guarded fragility in Es
She goes to the extravagant expense
returning home by taxi each night fr
the West End; she rarely leaves the h
during the day, and meals are sent
from the local pub. She is literally
symbolically fed by others. Her husb
an undistinguished landscape pain
died when Amy was a year old,
Amy's childhood project with Esme
clearly to fill the grief-stricken void.
now Esme has to fill Amy's sudden
quest for five thousand pounds.
writes the check and winkles out
situation: Amy is pregnant, and, ou
fear of losing Dominic, she won't
him. "I made him a promise. No c
dren," she says; she plans to have
baby, rear it alone, and inform him la
Esme suffers Amy's naïveté more or
in silence, but when Dominic app
from upstairs, she announces, "Domi
my daughter has something to tell yo

nd as Esme goes off to bed she turns ck to him at the door. "She's preg nt," she says, and exits. With that su rb curtain line, the play's drama of nscious and unconscious aggression is t in motion. Hare sees himself in the litical tradition of John Osborne, but ese well-turned observations of upper niddle-class behavior stake a claim for im not as the Osborne of his era but s the Somerset Maugham.

By Act III, set in 1993, sme, who turns out to have een a Name in a bankrupted loyd's syndicate, has been rced to take work in dread d television. She is gallant in e face of loss. "How can I lame anyone except for my lf," she says, having been armed into signing a con act she never read. Esme has st her money on a whim; my has lost her life. She s borne Dominic—now a nowned pundit—two chil en, has finally married him, d has been holed up for six onths since tabloid reports his affair with a Scandina an starlet. Yet Amy rounds Esme for a childishness e won't face in herself. She rates Esme to grow up and ce the problems you have." e works herself into a hirlwind of bewildering ac sation: "I want a mother o I can ring up. . . . Who can call, who won't judge ." But it's Amy who has sed to phone, who does the judging, and who lly confesses that her six-month si ce was because "I can't face admitting 're right." Esme tries to embrace y, but they fight free of each other, h demanding what the other can't . Their separation feels not so much an evolution as like a hemorrhage, l that is how, two years later, at the of forty-one, Amy dies.

The final scene is played out back ge in Esme's dingy, cramped dressing m, in 1995, when she's enjoying a hit a shipwreck costume drama. We learn t Esme has grown in her art, but en Dominic, who is now newly mar d and the successful director of a ckbuster action movie, comes to the ssing room to make amends, we see that she has not grown in her life. "I do my best not to think about you at all," she tells him. She won't cash the checks he has sent to help her out in her reduced circumstances, and she projects her blaming of Dominic for Amy's accidental death into her dislike for the kind of violence that he purveys on film. "Are you just bored? Or is it that you just don't dare to deal with real experience?" she asks, unable to hold back tears. "Like grief . . . and loss . . . the loss of people we love." Dominic asks for forgiveness, but he doesn't get it. He leaves Esme a wrapped parcel which turns out to be a shoebox full of cash. "My daughter's ashes," she says to Toby, a fellow-actor (Christopher Staines), throwing it in her closet as they exit for the stage. Some losses, Hare seems to be saying, are beyond repair. At this point, Eyre brilliantly moves the play out of melodrama into vision: flats fly away, a cyclorama drops down, a billowing cloth stretches in front of Toby and Esme as they face upstage, waiting for the play to begin. "So we're alone," Esme says to him, and the word "alone" echoes Esme's history—she is alone with loss, alone with talent, and, finally, alone with the responsibility of expressing for others the feelings they cannot find in themselves. Even though love doesn't find a way in this strangely modest tale, Hare has found his way beyond polemic to real people, which is why, for me, "Amy's View" ranks with "Racing Demon" as his best work. Broadway doesn't beckon—it positively waves and shouts.



David Hare (bottom right) and the cast of "Amy's View."

THE other hot ticket in London this summer is "Closer," at the Cottesloe, which is harder to get into than the reading room of the British Museum. It is the extremely smart, funny, and downright dirty second play by Patrick Marber, which in twelve pithy scenes explores the proposition that love is a fiction manufactured by *Homo sapiens* to create a sense of destiny out of the vagaries of chance. Here, four adepts of alienation—an obituary writer (Clive Owen), a lap dancer with an alias (Liza Walker), a doctor (Ciaran Hinds), and a photographer of strangers (Sally Dexter)—meet by accident, fall in love, fight, cruelly betray one another, and swap partners in a round-robin of sexual delirium which substitutes for identity. Along the way, Marber, who directs the play with less sureness of rhythm than he writes with, adds some original touches to the landscape of desire, includ-ing some very memorable girl talk about guys. "We arrive with our baggage and for a while they're brilliant, they're baggage handlers," says the photographer to the lap dancer. "We say, 'Where's your baggage?' They deny all knowledge of it, they're in love, they have none." She continues, "Then, just as you're relaxing, a great big juggernaut arrives . . . with their baggage. It got held up. The greatest myth men have about women is that we overpack." Out of all this agitation and infidelity, Marber, who is among the most gifted of the new generation of British writers, traps a particular contemporary nihilism: a dream of wanting where everything wanted is finally worthless. ♦

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ACROSS
1 DELI (anag.)
4 SPAN (rev.)
9 DUE T + O
10 SP(L)IT
11 CO + L + OSSAL (*lasso* rev.)
13 ROSE (2 defs.)
14 MOWN (*moan* hom.)
16 FLAME + NCO
18 CR(E)AM
19 RACES (2 defs.)
20 TRE + K
21 EDEN (anag.)

DOWN
1 DISCOMFOR + T (*from Disco* anag.)
2 sEXPOt
3 IDIOT (anag.; & lit.)
5 PER + SON + NEL (*Len* rev.)
6 AT EASE (hidden)
7 NO + BLEW + OMEN
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12 COLLAR (*caller* hom.)
15 V + ERSE
17 CAVE (2 defs.)

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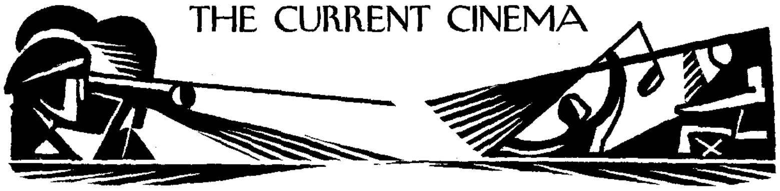
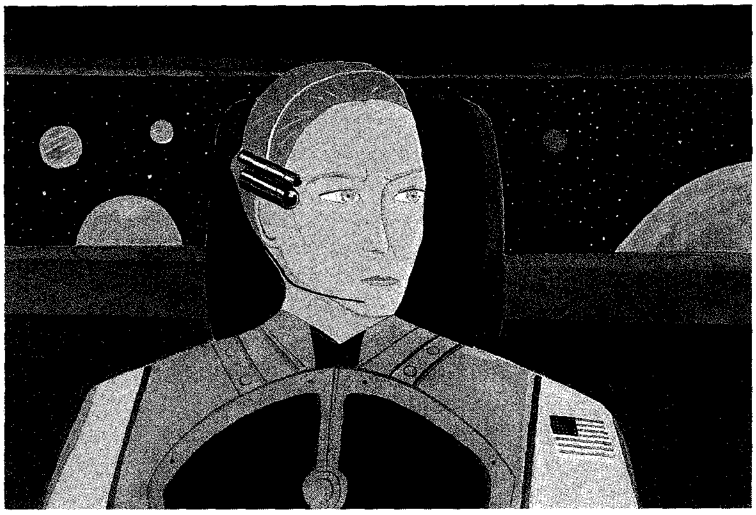


SPACED OUT

“Contact” brings us therapy from beyond.

BY ANTHONY LANE

CONTACT” is Robert Zemeckis’s first film since “Forrest Gump,” which makes it some kind of casion. Based on a novel by Carl Saan, it tells the tale of Dr. Ellie Arroway, scientist who spends her days listen-for radio signals from alternative life-rms, rather like Kris Kristofferson ning in to all those hairy truckers “Convoy.” Ellie is an obsessive; she practically born with a pair of head-ones over her ears, and as a nine-year-girl (a good, uncute performance n Jena Malone) she was encouraged these pursuits by her widowed dad avid Morse). He then died, leav-her to grow up into Jodie Foster—tchy and lonesome, wearing Bill tes spectacles and with her hair aped back as if she were preparing an emergency face pack. Even ong those who share her fascina- with outer space, Ellie is thought be spaced out, and when govern-nt sponsorship is withdrawn from project, she goes into hyperdrive, ning that lack of funds could cause to miss “the most profoundly im-tful moment in human history.”



Into the wormhole: Jodie Foster on her lonely pod journey.

We now approach the most resoundingly crunchful moment in the cinematic event. Equipped with money donated by a bald billionaire and all-purpose supercreep (John Hurt), Ellie is seen lounging one day in a field beside her car. It’s a beautiful and rather witty shot, with Zemeckis summoning a kind of techno-pastoral: Foster strikes an Andrew Wyeth pose, but stretching away in the background is a daisy chain of enormous radio dishes. Ellie seems comfortable in such a landscape, and stays there while daylight fails; the next thing we see is a closeup of her eyes, tightly shut and filling the screen, and the next thing we hear is a thump. A gusting, thrumming, fizzy thump, not wholly unmusical—almost a gump. Then one more, then another, until there’s no doubt about it: call waiting. Although we knew that this had to happen, the point at which Ellie’s eyes open, the slow dawn of her realization, is still unquestionably thrilling, and the next twenty minutes or so, as her colleagues get to work, are the busiest and most stirring in what is otherwise a long and patience-stretching movie. Since “Apollo 13,” I have had a

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weakness for scientists reeling off streams of data at each other—the louder and more incomprehensible the better.

In one respect, Zemeckis improves upon Ron Howard's film: he arranges for the technical details to gather pace and fury and then slams them into the side of a sick joke. The signal from the stars is decoded into a visual image and played on a video monitor; it is fine-tuned, focussed, and turned on its side to reveal what appears to be a swastika. Pull back a little and you get the full picture: Adolf Hitler. It's an inspired, not to say unsettling, gag. We like to imagine other species as either kindly child-substitutes with eyes borrowed from Jean-Paul Sartre or as wet-fanged beasties who like their earthlings medium rare, but it never crossed our minds that they might be *Nazis*. Thoughts of some ghastly interstellar *Bierkeller* are, thankfully, soon swept aside; it just so happens that the Berlin Olympics of 1936 marked one of the first television broadcasts, and some channel-surfer near the star Vega picked up the ceremony and beamed it back to say hi. Zemeckis isn't breaking new ground here: Joe Dante made a bright and underrated comedy called "Explorers," in which the aliens acquire all knowledge of us from TV transmissions—their first words of greeting are "Ehhh, what's up, Doc?" But Zemeckis twists the idea and pushes it further; the only sad thing is that this represents the final moment at which his movie makes contact with the forces of irony. From here on, naïveté rules.

In a thin strip at the top of the Hitler footage is a message: thousands upon thousands of what appear to be instructions. It is eventually decided that these constitute a blueprint for building some sort of machine, although I still maintain that if they are really *that* baffling they are far more likely to be a new and advanced recipe for phyllo pastry. Anyway, various world powers club together to build the contraption, which is essentially a gyroscope the size of a cathedral. Nobody knows how or why it should work; the plans merely specify a pod, like a giant French *boule*, with enough space for one passenger and no luggage, which will drop into the spinning gyroscope and travel to distant worlds, provided that it leaves Earth before rush hour on a Friday.

A shortlist of suitable humans is drawn up, but Zemeckis, who by now is well into yearning mode, is not interested in taking us through the cast of candidates, as Philip Kaufman did so smartly in "The Right Stuff." The only contenders we meet are David Drumlin (Tom Skerritt), who used to be Ellie's boss, and Ellie herself. Hang on, guys. You have a whole planet to pick from, and you choose Jodie Foster? I am a major Foster fan, but one thing is perfectly clear: Ellie does not need a long trip into space. She needs to get (1) a square meal inside her, (2) some rest, and (3) laid. As a matter of fact, she does get laid, early in the film, but only by Matthew McConaughey, and that doesn't count. It certainly has very little effect; he plays a thinker and author named Palmer Joss, nicknamed God's diplomat, who wanders through this hundred-million-dollar special-effects bonanza reminding us of the perils of technology. (Speaking of which, is he the same Joss who invented the stick?) I suspect that one of Ellie's reasons for wanting to reach out to creatures other than us is that, whatever happens, it can only be more fun than a one-night stand with Palmer Joss. In an act of uncharitable constriction, the movie roots her passion for things extraterrestrial in an orphan's traumatic inability to connect with terrestrial beings. "I feel more real," she says of her stargazing, thus instituting a new and expensive habit for worried Americans: galacto-therapy. The politic, unscrewy Drumlin fades from the picture, thanks to an accident on the launch pad, and Ellie gets her own pod; as the machine starts to turn, you can't tell whether her face is quivering from all the g-forces or because Jodie Foster is doing her trademark shudder, complete with staring eyes and lips pressed into a line. It's a look that we have watched before, as Hannibal Lecter quizzed her softly through the bars of his cage, but there the neurosis rang true and sharp, and we were moved by Clarice's determination to ride her sorrows and finish the job. Ellie, by contrast, never seems like a pro at all. The Ripley of "Alien" would shake her off like moondust and leave her for dead.

It comes as no surprise, then, when Ellie has an Experience. The pod burrows through a wormhole in space-time, which consists of a million groovy colors screaming past at the speed of light. I was fully expecting her to bump into Keir Dullea from "2001" and his b
ing white hotel room, but instead she
rives on a gently murmuring beach.
this is the lesson of "Contact": you spe
half a trillion dollars, you travel twenty-
light-years, and you wind up in Ma
The joke is on Ellie, of course, w
forgot to pack her golf clubs. No wo
der she makes such a quick turnaroun
and hightails it back to Earth. To thos
on the launch site, she was absent f
no more than a matter of seconds; Ell
herself timed the journey at eightee
hours. "Contact" has much the sam
effect: it lasts a mere hundred and for
minutes, but somehow it feels a who
lot longer.

By the time of Ellie's return, I w
dreading what would come next. S
becomes a Cassandra, poor thing, w
only Palmer Joss having the courage
believe her story, but even worse is
awful manner in which she is compell
to tell it. "I was given a vision of t
universe that tells us how tiny and i
significant and precious we are," she e
plains at an official hearing. "In all o
searching, the only thing that's ma
the emptiness bearable is each othe
How a movie that began with the pro
ise of such excitement can fritter its
away into these plaintive consolatio
I have no idea. It's a kind of dumbi
up, a desperately ill-advised ascent i
musings that don't have the nerve to
openly religious; "Contact" is the antit
esis of a picture like "Close Encount
of the Third Kind," which resolv
itself into an array of luminous imag
that hinted at all manner of annu
ciation but wisely stayed free of a
attempt to put such awe into wor
Zemeckis is an old friend of Spielbe
and the creator of "Who Framed Ro
Rabbit?" and the "Back to the Fut
trilogy—so what happened? Does
honestly think that to forsake the s
of those early works for the drool
spiritual hunger of "Forrest Gump"
"Contact" means that he has gro
up? I clambered from the sweaty
of "Contact" no wiser than when I w
in, but I have to confess that, as I
there in the dark, Ellie's words to Pal
Joss spoke to me soul to soul: "W
are we doing here?" Good questio

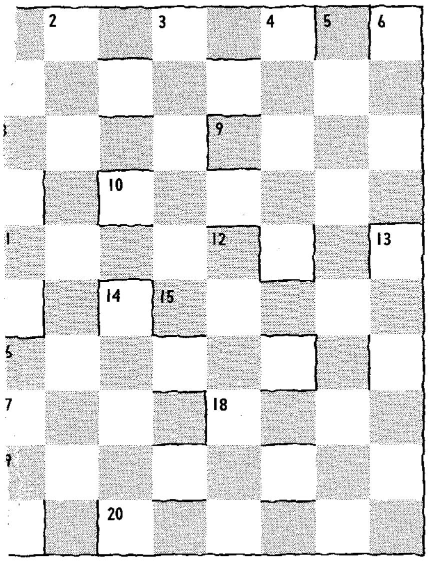
BLOCK THAT METAPHOR!

[*From Ephemera News*]

News traveled like wildfire across
Atlantic.

8 x 10 CRYPTIC

). 7 BY DAVID ELLIS DICKERSON



CROSS

- 1 Iranian dialect is normal, see? (6)
- 7 Honestly crazy, in secret (2,3,3)
- 8 CompuServe member! (4)
- 9 Move prison (4)
- 10 Creed of Christianity is 75% niceness (6)
- 11 Get atop cedar's first branch (5)
- 15 Almost pay friend of John Paul II (5)
- 16 Ornaments bother nurses (6)
- 17 Weakens vital fluids (4)
- 18 Guy's partner at a big party (4)
- 19 Little devil wanders around, becomes a better person (8)
- 20 Gully near Roy Orbison's property (6)

WN

- 1 1/16 of a pound added after bit of price jump (6)
- 2 Photographer as a lens-mad drunk (5,5)
- 3 Hour taken by a ninny, someone short (6)
- 4 High regard is insufficient for Ms. Lauder (5)
- 5 Yell back, after second-rate actress Hamilton: "It doesn't lead to much" (5,5)
- 6 String instrument untruthful person heard (4)
- 12 Sound of a gunshot over Oregon city in the northeast (6)
- 13 Somewhere in Texas, a Pole's going nuts (2,4)
- 14 Father's opposite seen in Pennsylvania (5)
- 16 A murder or theft, for example (2,2)

• •

e solution to puzzle No. 6 appears on page 80.
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ving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your
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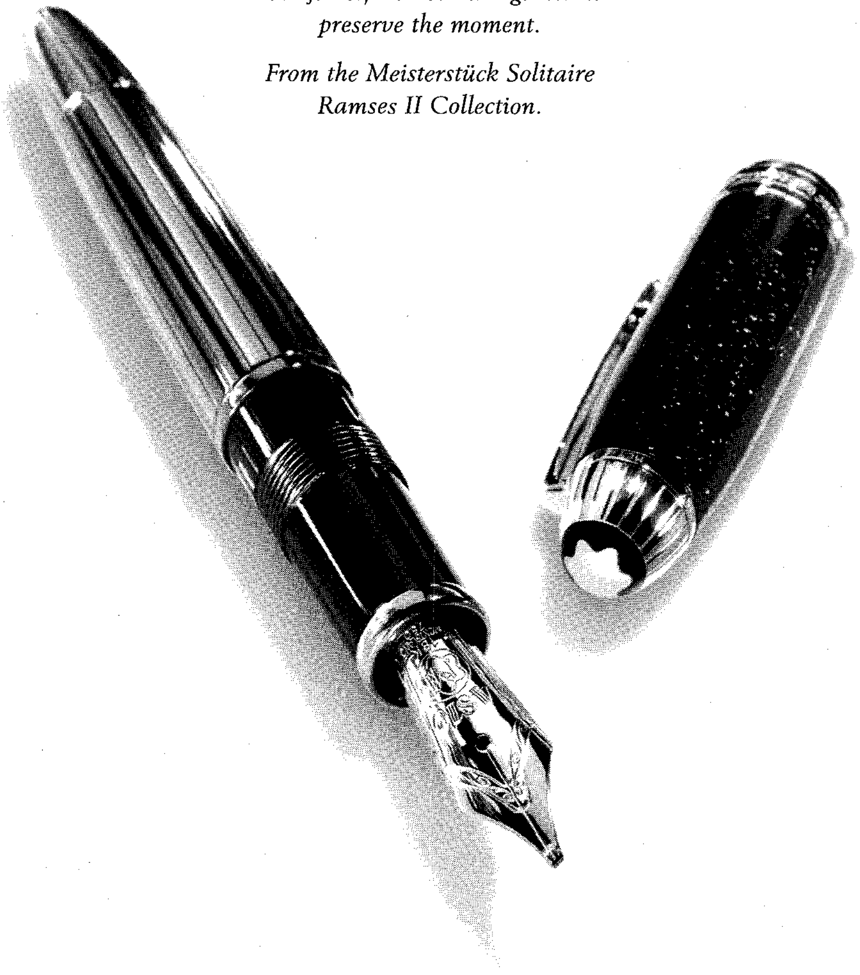

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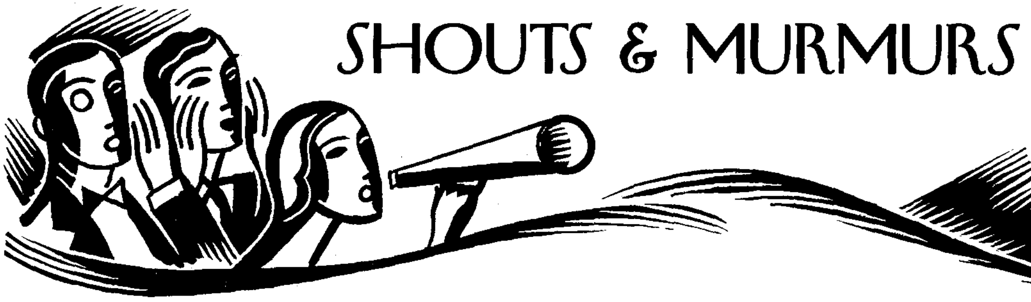


HOW I JOINED MENSA

BY STEVE MARTIN

I STARTED with the phone book. Looking up "Mensa" was not going to be easy, what with having to follow the strict alphabetizing rules that are so common nowadays. I prefer a softer, more *fuzzy* alphabetizing scheme, one that allows the mind to float free and "happen" upon the word. There is pride in that. The dictionary is a perfect example of over-alphabetization, with its harsh rules and every little word neatly in place. It almost makes me never want to eat again.

Joining Mensa means that you are a genius, and enables you to meet other members who will understand what the hell you are talking about when you say, for example, "That lamppost is tawdry." That's the kind of person they're after. Joining Mensa instills in one a courtly benevolence toward nonmembers, who would pretend to know what you know, think what you think, and stultify what you perambulate.

I worried about the arbitrary 132 cutoff point, until I met someone with an I.Q. of 131 and, honestly, he was a bit slow on the uptake.

I gave up on the phone book, which led me astray time and again with its complex passages, and then tried blind calling with no success. Next, 1-800-MENSA, which weirdly brought dead silence on the other end of the phone. A week later, while *volksvalking*, I realized that "Mensa" didn't contain enough numerals to be a phone number, and knew it must be understood that any future member would be able to figure out the next two digits in the sequence. I tried dialling MENSANE, MENSAIL, MENSAFE, and MENSAAB, but got three rebuffs and a fax tone.

So it was with neither rhyme nor reason that I stumbled into a party in my building when I inverted my floor number and got off at 21 instead of 12. Entering the party, I flipped back the Oushak rug and counted the knots per square inch. These people had money. I heard snippets of conversation: words like "feldspar" and "euonym" filled the air. In the corner, a lone piper played a dirge. Instantly, I knew where I was. This was a Mensa party.

That's when I saw Lola. She had hair the color of rust and a body the shape of a Doric column—the earlier ones, pre-invasion. She walked across the room carrying one of those rum drinks, slid herself onto the blue velveteen sofa, and endearingly poked herself in the face with her straw when she missed her mouth. If she truly was Mensa, she would have no problem with my introduction: "Please don't relegate me to a faraway lea," I ventured.

DICTIONARY

"I can see you've read Goethe, the Snooky Lanson translations," she countered. "Lozenge?"

I was putting her at around 140. Her look told me she was pegging me in the low 120s. My goal was to elevate her assessment and wangle a Mensa membership form out of her. Taking a hint from the soap operas, I talked to her with my back turned while staring out a window: "Wouldn't you rather parse than do anything?"

"Hail Xiaoping, the Chinese Goddess of Song," she rejoined. Lola then engaged in some verbal sparring that left me reeling. "This is quite an impressive apartment," she offered.

I saw a dictionary on its stand. O, how I longed to run to it and look up "impressive"! How I wanted to retort in Mensa
ese! But it was my turn, and I spoke: "I'
not sure if that's a compliment or an i
sult." I threw my head back, laughin
coughed out my lozenge, and watched
nestle into the Oushak. She asked me m
name. "Call me Dor," I said. Later, I r
alized I'd meant Rod.

Lola and I sat and talked through t
night. After the party, I held her and whi
pered, "I love that you're in Mensa." S
whispered back, "I love that you're in Mens
too." My temperature dropped to arcti
She told me her phone number, but, sin
it was all sevens, I couldn't remember

MOST things one wants in life con
when they are no longer needed. M
membership was awarded exactly one ye
later, when I applied and became an ho
orary Mensa "plaything." I sold my refriger
tor and with the money went on a Men
love-boat trip to Bermuda. Embarking
saw a woman standing aft, her back to m
slightly bent over the railing, looking ve
much the way a Doric column would lo
if it were bent over a railing. She turned a
saw me, and I again saw my Lola. It wa
though nothing had changed in a year,
cause we were both wearing the same thi
we wore on that night, still unwashed.
spoke: "Long time no see, Dor."

I corrected her, gaining the upper ha
"My name's not Dor."

"What is it?"

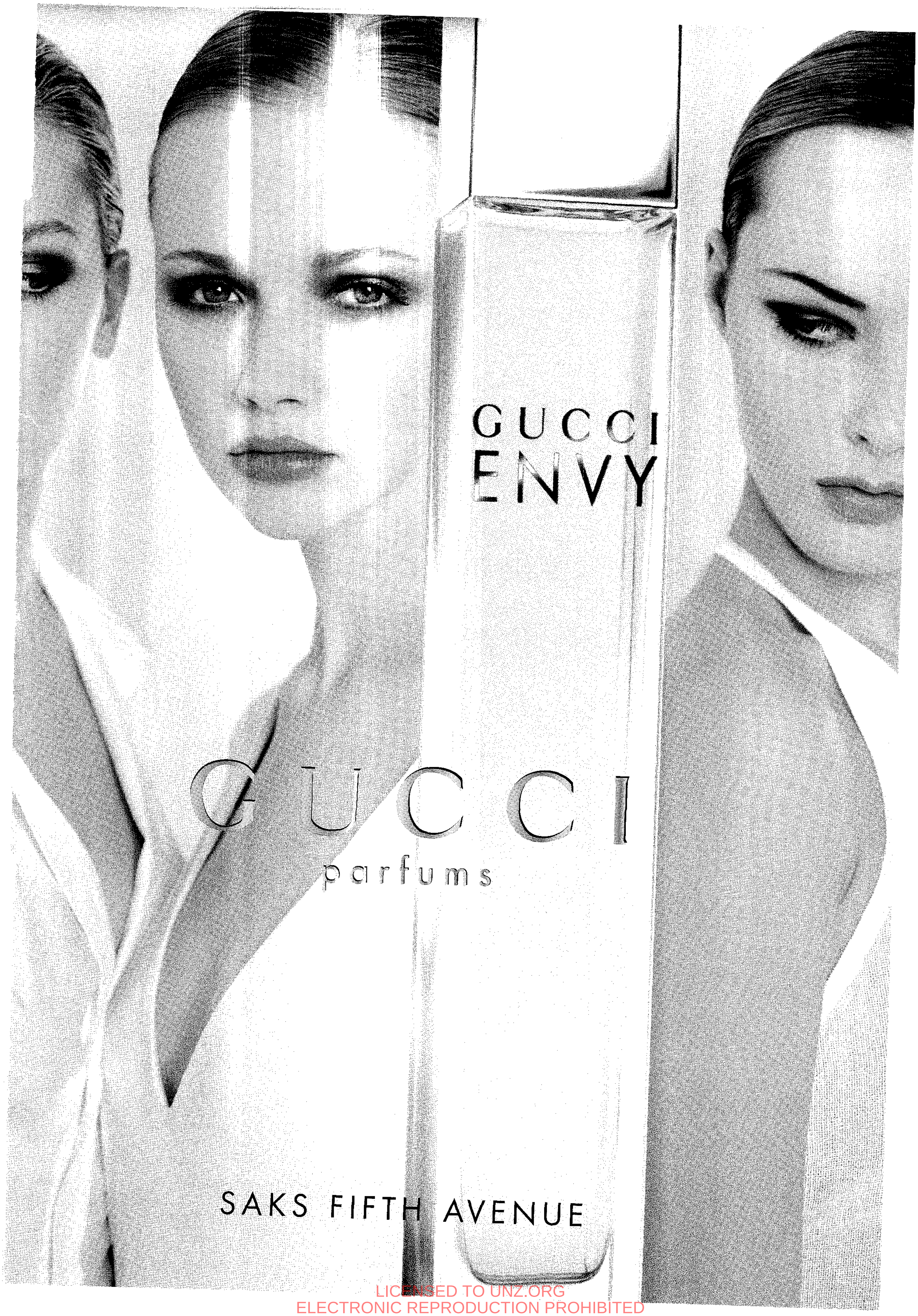
"It will come to me."

"Would you like to take a walk on
boatdeck?" she asked.

Boatdeck? Where is the damn dict
nary when you need it?

She spoke: "I have only two years
live. Let's enjoy them while we slav

"Then slaver we shall, slaver we sha
I took her hand, and we turned ea
ward, toward the setting sun. "And,
the way, my name is Ord." ♦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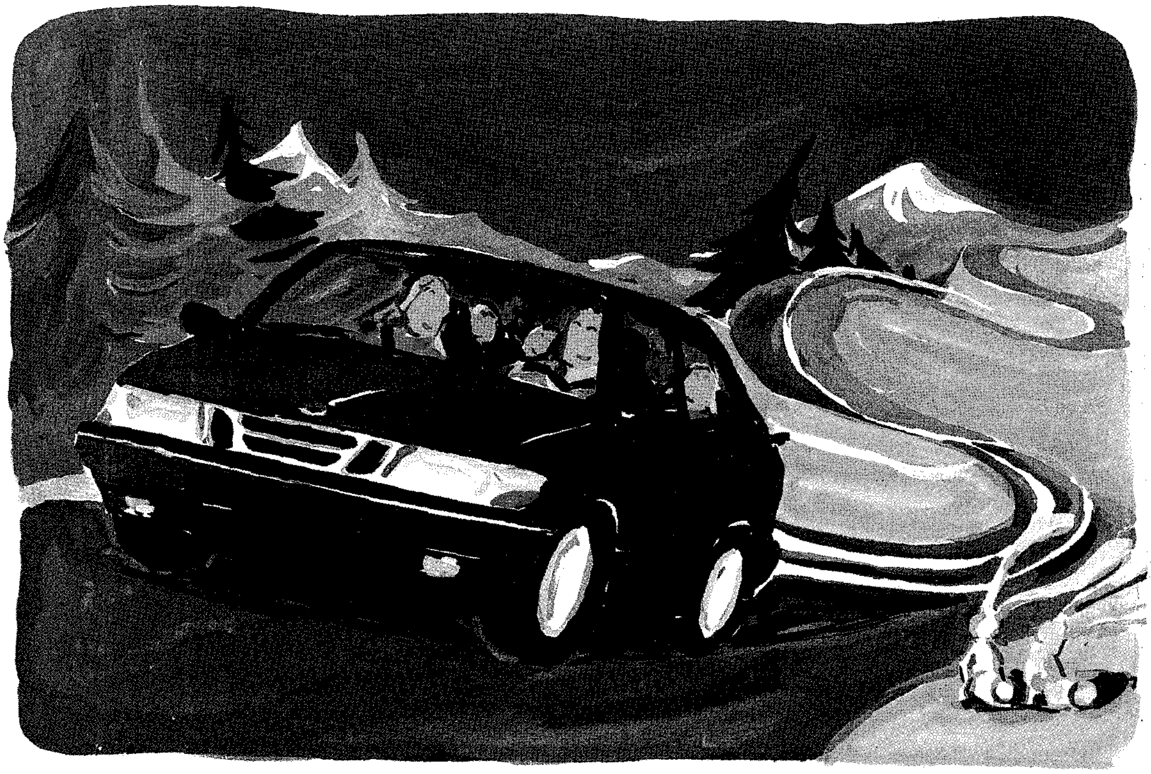

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